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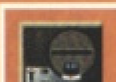
MEAN MACHINES SEGA is proud to present the first review of a 32X title as we unveil Sega's conversion of their CG Model 1 coin-op. It all started a long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away...

STAR WARS ARCADE



REGULARS

REVIEWS



MEGADRIVE

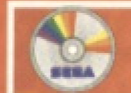




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MEGA-CD





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WHODUNNIT

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SPECIAL NO THANKS TO:Those snippety-snippety-snip people.

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GREAT UNANSWERED QUESTIONS OF OUR TIME: Nos 15 and 16.
15. Does this mean that Kebab Magic is on its way from Breville? 16. Does anyone believe that the kids in GamesMaster's Consoletation Zone are genuine viewers?

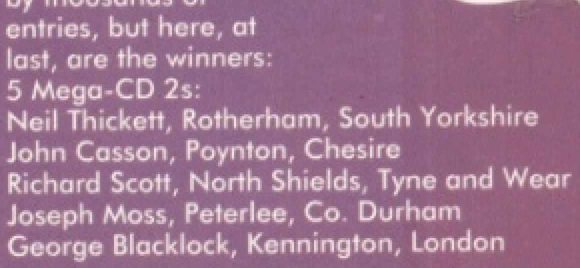
DINGBATS MESSAGE



STEVE

First of all, we hope you like the cover-mounted book which contains the best of last year's reviews. Next, after months of speculation, the 32X is finally here! We've seen all four of the games ready for the machine's release and, with the exception of Metal Head, everything Sega have lined up is looking pretty cool. We're extremely proud to have the first review for the machine, too, as we lift the lid on Star Wars Arcade, and this is backed up by previews of Doom and Virtua Racing Deluxe. December the 4th is the launch day for the machine, and the software is certainly better than that for the Mega-CD's launch — hopefully, proving those who dismissed the unit as a stop-gap horribly wrong. As ever, only time will tell, but we're going to give it all the support it needs and our unrivalled coverage will continue well into the next year or so. Things are about to get very exciting, so join us for the ride into the next generation...

CONGRATULATIONS AND JUBILATIONS!



If you cast your minds back to a couple of issues ago, you'll remember the stormingly brilliant Mega Monster Munch compo to win five Mega-CD 2s and 20 cases of Flamin' Hot Monster Munch. We were inundated by thousands of entries, but here, at last, are the winners:

5 Mega-CD 2s:
Neil Thickett, Rotherham, South Yorkshire
John Casson, Poynton, Chesire
Richard Scott, North Shields, Tyne and Wear
Joseph Moss, Peterlee, Co. Durham
George Blacklock, Kennington, London

20 Cases Mega Monster Munch:
Mickey Johnson, Mosely, Birmingham
Jon Anderson, Ilford, Essex
Sohidur Rahman, Wapping, London
James Turner, Halesowen, West Midlands
D Marden, Ashford, Kent
Christian Parsley, Pembroke, Dyfed
Ben Cooke, Bognor Regis, West Sussex
Ian Busby, Kidlington, Oxon
Andrew Jackson, Coventry
Tony Coote, Camberwell, London
Westley Knight, Northampton
Ryan Eve, Bromley, Kent
Marcel Borg, Stockwell, London
David Lot, Stockport
Matthew Elliott, Ruislip, Middlesex
Nicholas Whyte, London
Jerome Williams, London
Craig Thompson, Ruislip, Middlesex
Paul Kaanon, Hastings Hill, Scotland
Joel Delane, Stanmore, Middlesex

CLAIRE'S CONSOLE CUISINE

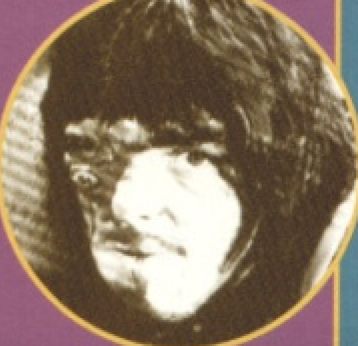
Hull-oo! Claire here in my all new feature to make sure you're eating your greens while staring at those console screens. Keeping a regular diet can be a right hassle when battling with the rest of the boys on Micro Machines 2. So-oo I've cooked up some nutritious, bu-ut exciting gourmet gaming grub. For starters how about some Sonic and Noodles Soup, for a main course perhaps some Meatballz (for the vegetarians Mr Nutz cutlets), and for pud some Virtua Spotted Dick! You know I just love sharing recipes with my chums, and I might even be able to rustle up a prize for the most delicious digital delight. So post your dishes to me in CLAIRE'S CONSOLE CUISINE, at the usual address. Cheers big ears!



LOOK-O-LIKES

Separated at birth? Freak biological accident? Or just the plain spit of someone rich and famous? The Mean Team, or so it appears, all bear an inexplicable resemblance to a star of the stage, screen, or pitch. Can you spot the difference?...

TIE-JOKERS!!



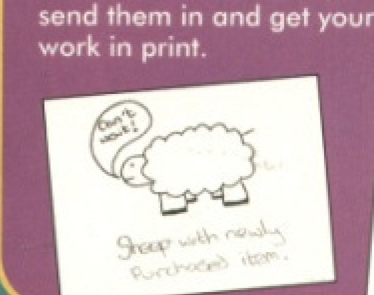
There's always one, isn't there? That madcap crazy prankster type who simply has to answer the tie-breaker in a completely weird 'n' whacky way. And after sifting through the thousands of tie-breakers, we have collected together some of the more <I>unusual<P> offerings.

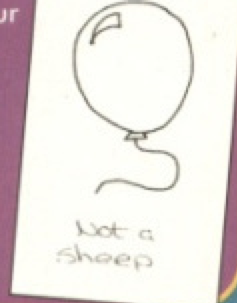
<B>Mega Monster Munch and the Mega-CD 2 are the perfect match because...<P>

They both share the same interests and are Capricorns.
They both have the same at the beginning.
They're both Mega and flamin' hot with children.
They are both Mega and flamingly wickedly hot mamma.
They both 'drive' you crazy with excitement and pleasure!
The Mega-CD is so hot they had to put it in a black case to keep it cool, and Mega Monster Munch are so hot they have to be put in foil so we don't burn or fingers.
Both are called Mega so no surnames have to be changed when married. (?)

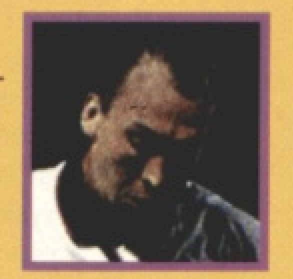
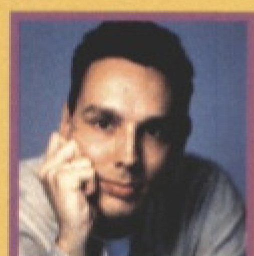
POSITIVELY BAAA-MY!

Charlie says: You want more sheep? You get more sheep! Following last month's debut, Master Garrick has dusted off his canvas (to Claire's delight) and penned some more rib-tickling sheep antics. Anybody else with hidden animal cartoon talents, send them in and get your work in print.



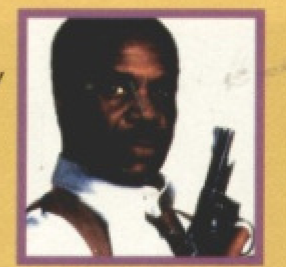
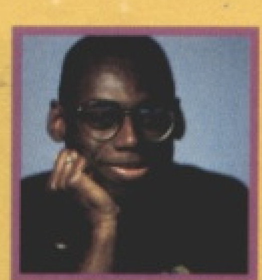


STEVE MERRETT

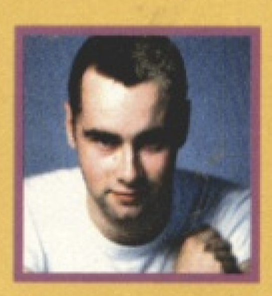
Goal! Yes, it's the England golden boy Steve standing in for his face-sake David Platt. The early days of his career were dominated by the lightning rise to the top of the league, but now he finds time to play for Serie A in Italy, the England squad, and edit Britain's best-selling Sega magazine! Steve enjoys nothing more than gracing Lord EMAP's team, but insists on playing in wellies to give the opposition a fair chance. That's his story anyway.
CHOICE GAMES:MEGA BOMBERMAN, STAR WARS ARCADE

OZ BROWNE

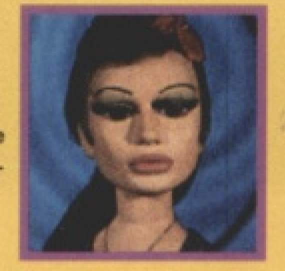
Fortune has waved her magic wand over our happy band and blessed us with a Mr 'H to the Core' Danny Glover of our own. Every morning a car screeches to a halt in front of EMAP Towers, and Oz rolls out with an Uzi in one hand and a cop badge in the other. He then whips off his jacket and throws it on the back of his chair, ready for some serious crime fighting and magazine design. Apparently, he's 'too old for this sh...', though.
CHOICE GAMES:STAR WARS ARCADE, STARBLADE, LION KING

ANGUS SWAN

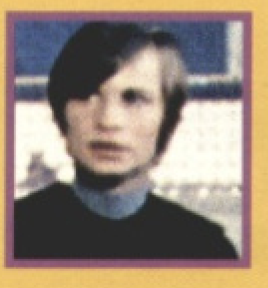
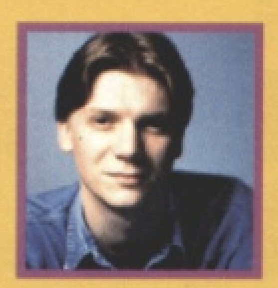
Gus has taken the law into his own hands and decided it's time the streets were cleared of filth. Part-time Taxi Driver/master of invention and metal-work, he has constructed a quick-draw action mop and hoover to deal with the discarded Monster Munch packets surrounding Claire. "I'll make these desks a safe place to work. Suck on this!", cries the vigilante as he clears debris. You talkin' t'me?
CHOICE GAMES:PSYCHO PINBALL, SOLEIL, DOOM

CLAIRE COULTHARD

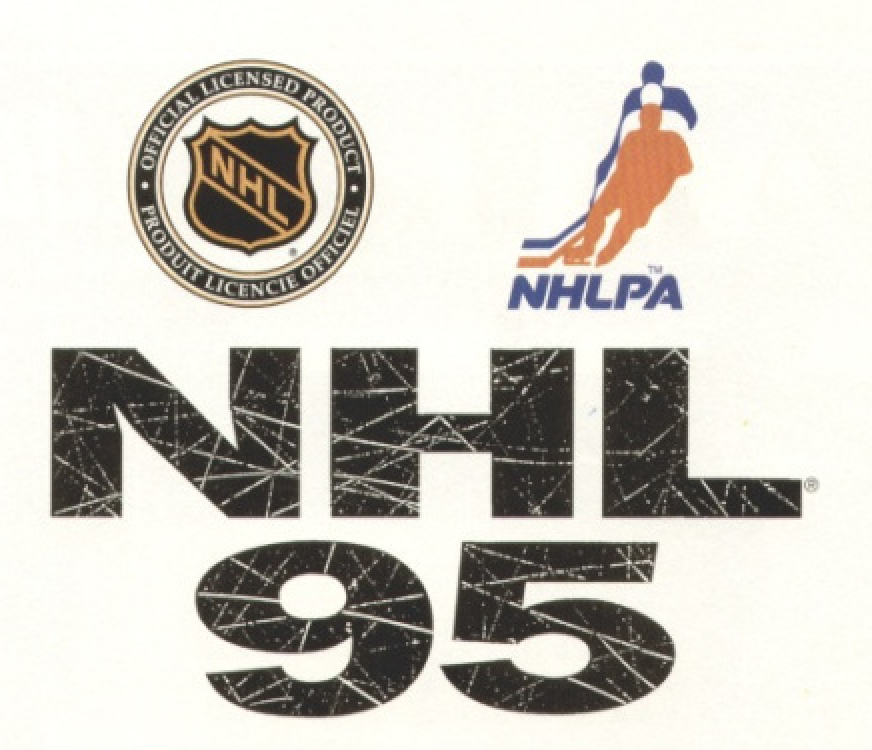



Brunette beauty Claire, aka Marina from out of Stingray, has the office swooning. One look at her social calender would send the most adept socialite into a state of shock. Endless movie premières, dinner engagements, and acting classes, leave our starlet with scarce time to put mouse to Mac and turn out the mag. Mind you we've had to make a few adjustments to the decor to accommodate Ms Stingray. And feed her a pile of plankton a day.
CHOICE GAMES:STAR WARS ARCADE, SKIPPING

PAUL BUFTON

The ever elusive Paul sure tries to keep the rest of the team on their toes. One minute he's running from a Corporate EMAP State of the future in an effort to avoid being executed at the age of 30, the next he's acting like a 50-year-old D'Artagnan. What is his elusive identity? Why Michael York, star of the small and silver screen. It's just a pity his new-found sword skills heavily outweigh his so-called rapier wit....
CHOICE GAMES:RUGBY, ECCO 2, SOLEIL


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SPORTS
ELECTRONIC ARTS

NEWS

SCI GO TO WAR

- NEW GAME
- BY SCI
- 32X

SCI are readying themselves for the leap to 32X as their sequel to the Lawnmower Man is ported over to the Sega plug-thru. Cyberwar exists as a 3-disk PC epic, but SCI are cramming the game and its many cinematic sequences into a 24bit 32X cart. Once again, the player is cast as Doctor Angelo is is chasing the VR-enhanced Jobe through a virtual world. However, Jobe has allied himself with a series of odd VR creatures and is preparing to take over the world from inside his binary domain. All the graphics and design have been ported over to the 32X, and SCI are currently converting the gameplay, meaning we should have something concrete to see — as opposed to these mocked-up shots — for a preview in the next couple of months.







COSMI

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- 32X

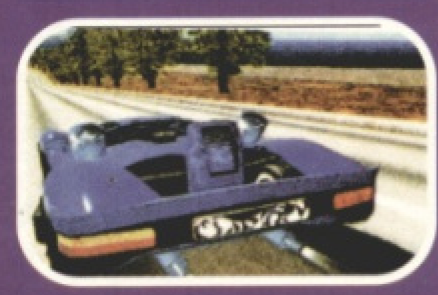
With the 32X's release date now set for December 4th, the number of games being prepared for the powerful plug-thru is growing at a phenomenal pace. Sega alone currently have around 42 titles in development for the Megadrive 32X — and MEAN MACHINES SEGA is proud to unveil the first pictures of the machine's first fighting game: Cosmic Carnage. The game is very similar in style to the Neo-Geo version of Art of Fighting, with loads of one-on-one action and special moves galore. However, Carnage is set in a number of space locations, and this means the combatants are even more outlandish than the likes of Baraka and lil ol' Jimmy Blanka. The same kind of sprite scaling is used to effectively frame the game's hectic combat action, zooming in and out depending on the location of the characters in the heat of battle. Cosmic Carnage currently weighs in as a 24MEG game, and boasts a wealth of stunning-looking backdrops and



BLOWIN' A GALE

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- SATURN

The Saturn is looking to be the patron saint of drivers with another stunning polygon racer added to Virtua Racing and Daytona. Gale Racer has the incredible detail of Daytona's Model 2 board, coupled with an Outrun style plotline. Mean looking turbo-charged cars and towering scenic backdrops look set to stun on its early '95 Japanese release.





C CARNAGE

superlative animation. As mentioned, there's the usual range of complex special moves, with some characters even having a range of weaponry to bolt onto their sophisticated armour. Adding to the carnage are some excellent special effects, including some very gory finishing moves — just the thing whilst 32X owners await the conversion of MKII.
The game is very early in development, but it's already shaping up to be a winner. Cosmic Carnage is scheduled to appear on the shelves early in 1995 — expect a February release and more pictures in the January issue.





▲ *It's the title screen! It's a 32X title screen! So it has a tendency to spin a lot!*

KONAMI 32X-PLOSION

- NEW GAME
- BY KONAMI
- 32X

Rumour has it that Konami are working on a shoot 'em up for the 32X which mixes the characters from Probotector with the 3D action of Doom. The as-yet unnamed game is being developed in Konami's Japanese office, and is said to offer more guns than Sega' conversion of the Id classic andc faster gameplay. Further details are sketchier than a Rolf Harris cartoon, but a full WIP is on the cards.





▲ *We can't wait for the Saturn. It's gonna be great.*

SATURN FLYING SQUADRON

- NEW GAME
- BY JVC
- SATURN

JVC are officially set to release Keio Flying Squadron this December, and the news coincides with the confirmation that they are also working on Keio 2 for the Saturn. Those of you with longer memories may remember our review of Keio a few years back where we were fairly impressed by the Nemesis lookalike. The Saturn version is being programmed by the team behind the original, and is said to include larger sprites, countless layers of parallax and loads of sampled speech. An interview with the Keio team is underway and will follow alongside a full preview of the Saturn game in a forthcoming issue.



VIRTUA FIGHTER II

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- TITAN

The recent JAMMA show (Japanese arcade convention) saw the unveiling of Sega's follow up to Virtua Fighter using the Titan Model 2 CG system previously used in Daytona Racing. Capable of 300,000 textured polygons a second, these early pictures show just how far it improves on Virtua Fighter. Bouts take place upon highly detailed backgrounds, and the characters have lost all their angularity — replaced by rounded bodies and skin textures. There's two new fighters as well.
Virtua Fighter II comes up the rear of three other impressive coin-ops: Virtua Cop which brings shooting action into the polygon sphere at last, and Virtua Tank Commander, which again uses the Model 2 board for astounding realism and speed. Lastly Wing War promises the first two-player head-to-head polygon game.









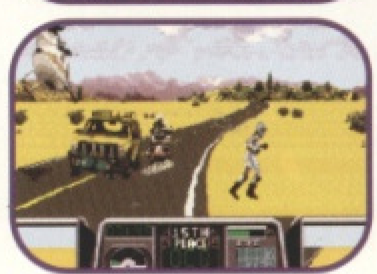


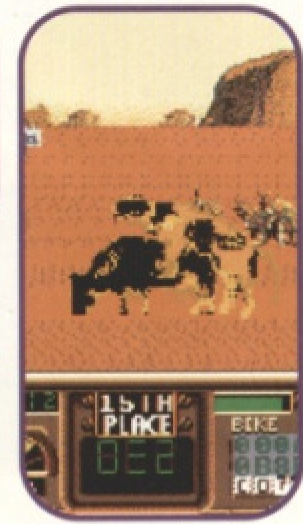
THRASHBACK!

- NEW GAME
- BY EA
- MEGADRIVE

EA are planning more motorcycle madness with the release in '95 of Road Rash III. Many of the sprites are being ported over from the incredible 3DO versions, and the game is going international, with tracks in Europe (including a TT-style tourney). There will be police helicopters to avoid, or you can even become a snitch for the cops. New aggressive measures include unsaddling rivals and stealing their bikes.



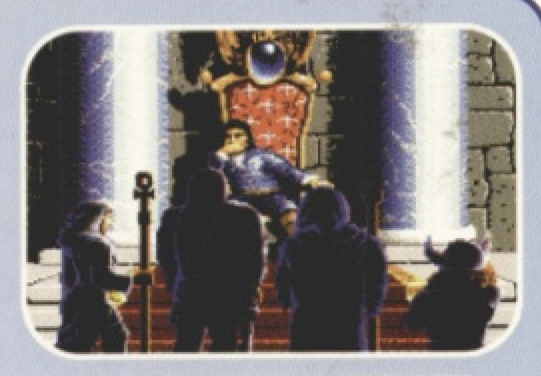




SEGA CATCH THE EYE

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- MEGA-CD

Mentioned briefly in Rich's CES report a few months ago, Sega have confirmed they are to release SSI's Mega-CD conversion of Eye Of The Beholder. A stunning-looking RPG, Eye draws ideas from FTL's classic Dungeon Master and gives the player control of four characters as they make their way across a series of 3D scrolling catacombs. All the usual goblins and dragons make cameos as bad guys and a variety of potions and spells are on offer to despatch them. Eye Of The Beholder is set for a December release, so Mega-CD owners are advised to stock up on eye of newt and spawn of toad in the meantime.

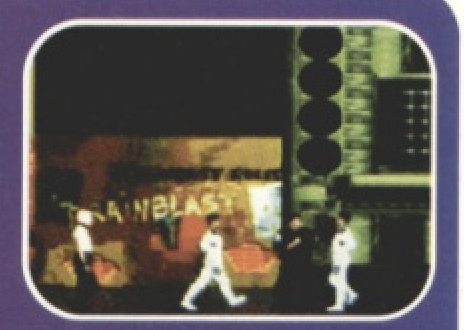






MANHUNTER

- NEW GAME
- BY JVC
- MEGA-CD







New movie Time Cop is undergoing a transformation into a trigger-friendly arcade/adventure courtesy of JVC. Playing lead character Max Walker, you pursue the frankly barmy Hans Kliendast as he seeks to alter the future by dabbling in the past, and achieve world domination. Set across diverse times scales, including Nuclear test sites and Nazi Germany, the game takes its inspiration from the Darkhorse comics of the same name, and the movie, just finished shooting and starring the inimitable Jean Claude VanDamme in the title role. The Mega-CD is bound to use some of the startling digital effects that are part of a $30m budget.

MYSTS OF TIME

- NEW GAME
- BY MARUBENI
- MEGA-CD

Probably the best game the Apple Mac has seen in years is now heading for the Mega-CD some time in the new year. Myst is a lavish mystery adventure set on a series of isolated islands, each with their own set of bizarre contraptions and long-unearthed mysteries. As a mysterious traveller you pass through striking locations rendered in fantastic graphics. All kinds of technical trickery are employed, but its the atmosphere and ingenuity of the plot and gameplay that makes this one of the most significant Mega-CD titles yet.



WIN! A HOLIDAY IN NEW YORK!

- COMPO
- EA/DIXONS

Been into Dixons to by your copy of EA's Urban Strike? Yeah? Get a specially-commissioned dog tag for your troubles? Yeah? Want to know if you've won the holiday for two in New York? You've come to the right place, as MEAN MACHINES SEGA are proud to present the winners of the EA/DIXONS/MEAN MACHINES Urban Strike compo. Ok, without any further ado, here's the lunky winners:

WINNER OF HOLIDAY TO NEW YORK

Tag number: 107-2330-1

WINNERS OF EA URBAN STRIKE JACKETS

Tag numbers: 107-2330-2, 107-2330-3, 107-2330-4, 107-2330-5

To claim your prizes, send your winning tag along with your name and address to the address below and EA will be in touch. Your lucky tags will also be returned to you. The address is:
URBAN STRIKE COMPETITION,
Electronic Arts,
90 Heron Drive,
Langley,
Berks,
SL3 8XP

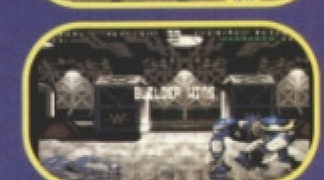
Please do not call the MEAN MACHINES SEGA offices regarding prizes or delivery.

ACCLAIM RISE TO THE OCCASION

- NEW GAME
- BY ACCLAIM
- MEGADRIVE

After more moves than West Ham's Lee Chapman, Rise Of The Robots has finally found a home — with Acclaim. The long-awaited beat 'em up starring a variety of rendered robots slugging it out started life at developers Mirage, was rumoured to be snapped up by Ocean, and apparently found a home with Time Warner. However, it was the big lads behind MKII who have snapped it up, and the assorted conversions of Rise should hit your local software emporium towards the end of November — the possibility of a 32X version to follow.







VERE ARE YOU ALL COMINK FROM?

- NEW GAME
- BY INFOGRAMES
- ALL FORMATS

Gallic softies, infogrames, are proudly brandishing their newly-acquired Sega licence and are set to unleash The Smurfs on the Megadrive, Mega-CD, Master System and Game Gear. Set in the teeny tiny world the Smurfs inhabit, the evil Gargamel has cast a spell over the 22-level domain, mutating the once-peaceful woodland creatures into vicious beasts. Initially controlling an ordinary Smurf, the game also puts the player in charge of Brainy and Jokey as they search for kidnapped friends amidst the platform-laden stages. Along the way, ducks, sledges and mine carts are ridden, and all manner of bonus recovered from hiding places. A full preview will appear in the January issue.



▼ *No, it can't be. It's a new Master System game!*

WE'RE ZANY TO THE MAX (AGAIN)

- NEW GAME
- BY KONAMI
- MEGADRIVE

With Animaniacs scoring a respectable 86% this very issue, Konami have already started work on a sequel for release next year. However, whereas the Warner Bros (and Sister) were the stars of the first game, Konami are planning to make mad mice, Pinkie and The Brain, the stars of the next one as the player aids them in their continuing quest to take over the world. More news as and when it becomes avaialble.



VIEWMASTER

- NEW GAME
- BY SAMMY
- MEGADRIVE

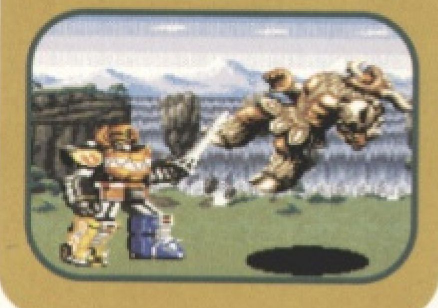
News from the States informs us of Sammy's conversion of Viewpoint to the Megadrive. Originally a 100MB Neo Geo arcade module, it was a minor classic a few years back due to its rock hard blaster gameplay, excellent polygon graphics (in an isometric Zaxxon-style setting) and groovy soundtrack. We even had the board upstairs for a while and had many hours of fun. Sammy's 16MEG conversion promises to be quite faithful, even in its early stages of development. No one has picked up this for European release yet, but it shouldn't be too long.



POWER RANGERS

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- MEGADRIVE

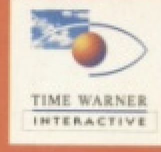
The biggest thing since the last big thing — those cheesy heroes, the 'lurid in lurex' Power Rangers — are heading for the Megadrive. It's a one-on-one beat 'em up with loads of special moves and backdrops made to appeal to the younger generation. More next time, PR fans...

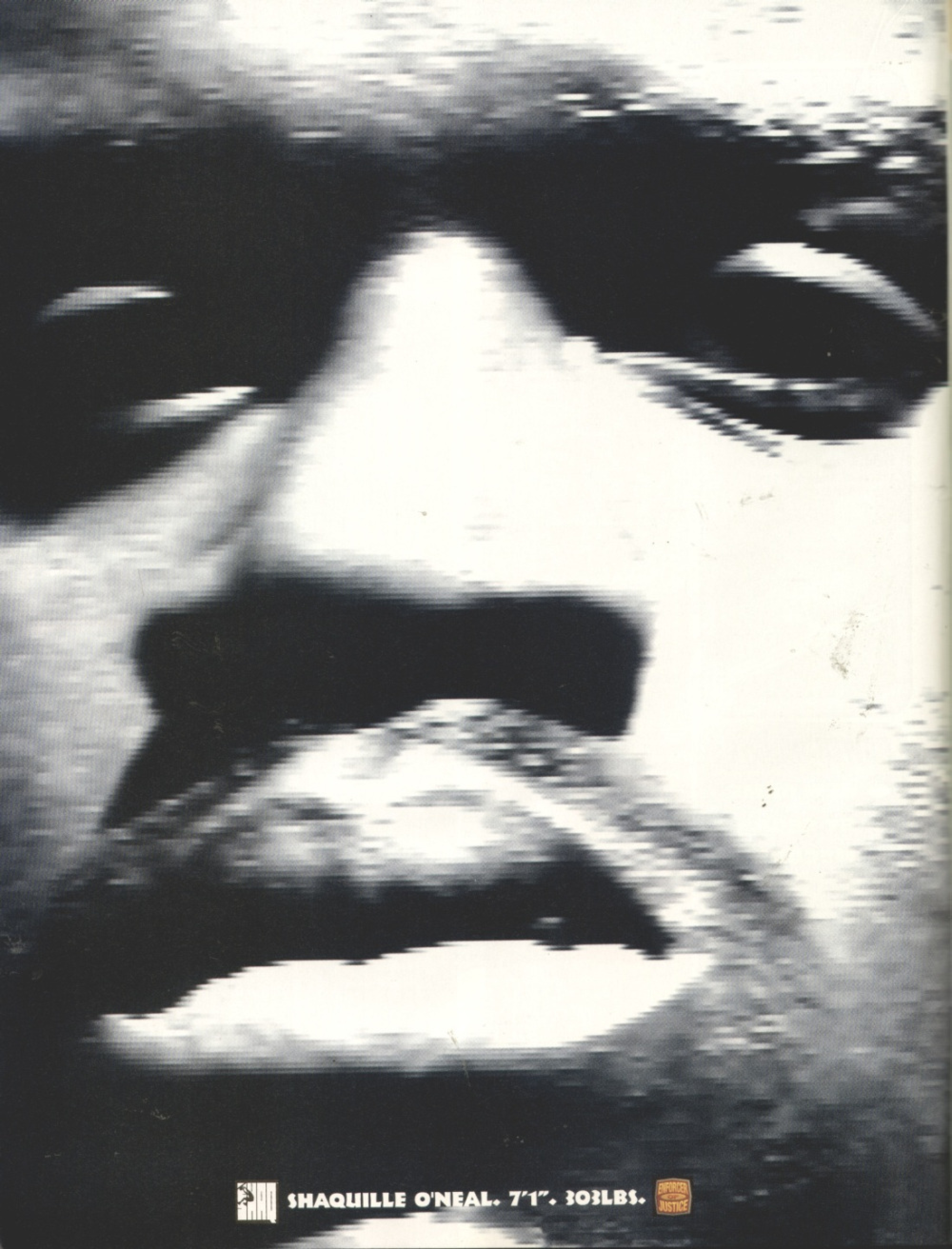


YOU DON'T SAY...

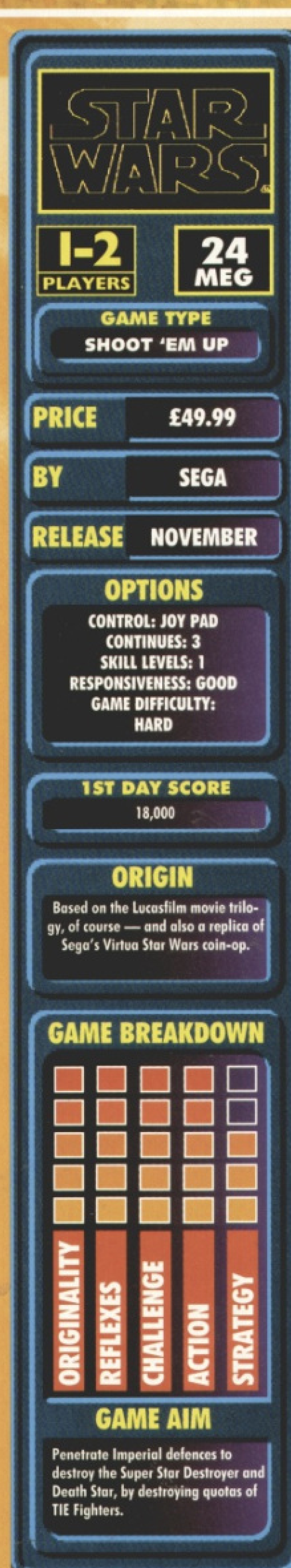
Velcome to anuzzer round of gossip and hearsay. Hahahahahah...

Hardly ones to waste time, Infogrames are about to unveil two new Megadrive titles. The first is a sequel to their **Asterix** game for the Super NES, and the second is an all-new adventure starring Herge's number one hero, **TinTin**. Both gallic heroes are currently well into their development time, and should appear early next year.
Another little birdy tells us that **Alone In The Dark** could be Mega-CD bound, too. Coo.
With a new company joining the Sega licence club, now is a time to mourn two recent coding deaths. First of all, EA's **Michael Jordan** game has been scrapped. Jordan was due to battle all manner of zombies with his trusty ball, but EA have put the title on what appears to be permanent hold. Similarly, Sony may have abandoned plans to release their Mega-CD interpretation of Kenneth Branagh's **Frankenstein** movie. Apparently it was scrapped because... well, because it was complete crap. that explains it then.
On a more pleasant note, we have reason to belive that Interplay's US coding team are busy transferring the sequel to Clay Fighter — **C2: Judgment Day** — to the Megadrive, and the game boasts even more doughy characters and oddball moves. More soon. Also on the beat 'em up front, those wacky chaps at Treasure are working on a beat 'em up with an obscure Japanese title, which involves lobbing magic spells at your opponent rather than knocking seven bells out of them. Sounds like typical Treasure fare, then!
Finally, we'll trek up to the 'Pool where Psygnosis are about to convert their forthcoming **Discworld** game to the Saturn. But only after they've finished a PSX version.
'Til next month,
Pip pip.




SHAQUILLE O'NEAL. 7'1". 303LBS.
ENFORCER
JUSTICE





STAR WARS ARCADE

Chapter VII: A New Hope

The days of the evil Nempire seem to be coming to an end. Once they had the galaxy in their icy grasp with Sturm(koopa)troopers and squadrons of deadly NES Fighters. But free gaming has survived the onslaught, and from their secret bases, the Sega rebellion have unleashed an incredible new weapon which will strike at the very heart of the those wobbly cape-wearers: the 32X-Wing Fighter. With its high-end polygon processing and superior sound and graphics, it's set to vanquish to the Mario dynasty and secure the eternal liberty of gaming. Precious plans of the unit are entrusted to Prince Yob and the crew of the Corellian Corvette 'Mean Machines', but as it speeds to rebel HQ on Emapia, it is intercepted by a mushroom class Star Destroyer. Quickly, Princess Liza inserts the crucial review data in a microchip fitted to Commander Merrett's underpants, which can only be revealed by opening the pages of the magazine...



more powerful than you could possibly imagine

Star Wars 32X plays in two distinct game modes. Most people will tackle the conversion of Star Wars arcade first, which replicates the action of the Virtua Star Wars coin-op, released earlier this year. The coin-op was programmed using Sega's Model 1 CG board (see our interview with Sega Amusements in issue 22 for full details), which can produce 180,000 polygons per second, and retails for around £6,000 for the stand-up version. Although the 32X cannot match these figures, the conversion is exact in terms of stages and bears a remarkable resemblance in appearance and play. The Arcade mode has both the 'Rebel Attack' and 'Training option' which offers a brief mission on the surface of a mock-up Death Star, giving you a chance to acquaint yourself with the controls.







here goes nothing..

The main thrust of the game is the 32X-enhanced game, which rejigs the levels, adds asteroid fields and poses almost impossible quotas of fighters to be destroyed before progress is made to the Death Star. Even more surprises, unrelated to the coin-op await those who are skillful enough to progress deep into this extremely challenging game.

imperial mint

The best of Imperial hardware has assembled in the war zone, making your mission in a lone X-wing fighter one of near lunacy. You will encounter in full polygon detail:

TIE FIGHTER

The standard Imperial single-manned fighter. The TIE is marked by its high manoeuvrability and rapid-firing lasers, which means letting one get behind you puts you in a particularly hazardous position. However, it is a plainly Imperial characteristic to put all the TIE's power into offence — there is no shield protection for the pilot, and a single hit is enough to destroy it.



TIE BOMBER

More heavily armed than its fighter cousin, the TIE bomber is also slower and less responsive, making it an easier target. It is distinguished by its double-cocK pit.



STAR DESTROYER

The mainstay of the Imperial fleet, these monstrous ships carry thousands of troops and firepower equivalent to a small sun. Flying at close range is not a clever idea, as Star Destroyers are capable of firing laser streams in all directions. However, these streams follow ray patterns which may be anticipated. Star Destroyers travel in packs at sub-light speeds.

DEATH STAR

Devised by the Emperor as the ultimate weapon of terror, the Death Star has been quantified as possessing the power of a thousand combined Star Destroyers, and demonstrations of its power include the destruction of Alderaan, a planet of the rebel federation. That particular Death Star was destroyed by Rebel Commander Skywalker. Blueprints for future Death Stars survived, but so did the knowledge of its single weakness.





double strike

In common with the arcade version, Star Wars 32X offers a choice between one or two-player simultaneous play options. Flying alone, you take the rebel's main assault craft, the four-laser X-wing fighter. As a team, 'Pilot and Gunner' puts you in command of the less celebrated Y-Wing craft. In previous Star Wars tradition this is a slower craft with different strategic employments, but in this game there is no appreciable difference in handling. Player one controls the central sight, and also steers the Y-Wing, while player two has a roving sight. Although both score separately, they share the common mission goal. The game compensates for the extra firepower with higher target totals and increased enemy ferocity. It is not an easy option, but it's darned good fun.



▼ *Plans of the enemy target are downloaded to your HUD before stages commence.*

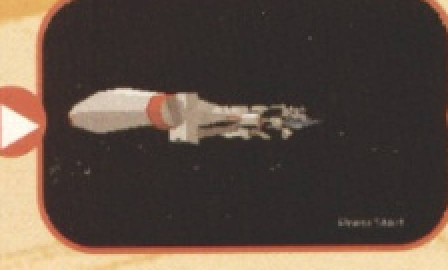
▲ *The lurid power of the Proton Torpedo.*

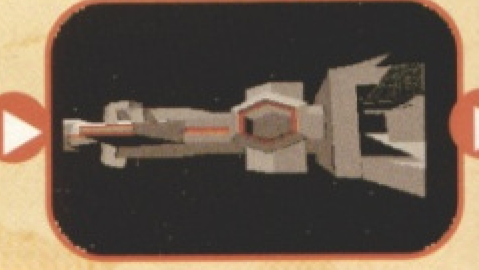
use the force

Both X and Y-wings have two weapons systems. Lasers are limitless, quick-firing and wholly under your control. The alternative Proton torpedoes, which look like green globes, are auto-targetting. To successfully hit their target, you must wait until the computer tracks the enemy craft, denoted by a audible warning and a super-imposed box. Your craft has a full complement of five proton torpedoes, but once discharged, these will slowly replenish









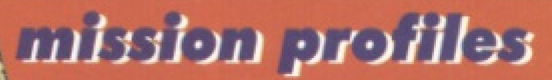




the vision thing

Like the other Sega VR games, you have multiple viewing options, each suiting different stages. The main view is from within the cockpit, in the first-person perspective, with all the game info on the surrounding panels. The other view is a 'chase' camera behind the craft, which gives a wider range of vision. The computer will alert you when enemies are on your tail with a warning message. From the cockpit you are aware of:





mission profiles

Each stage presents a different mission goal, with the backdrop of a time limit. After your ship is lost, your progress is shown pictorially, with a percentage of completion of the overall task.

ASTEROID FIELD

An initial quota of 15 TIE Fighters to be wheedled out of a field of cartwheeling rock chunks. These are fully interactive scenery.

STAR DESTROYER

More TIEs, in a dogfight wheeling in and out of a pack of huge Star Destroyers, who take part in the action.

STAR DESTROYER REACTOR

A spectacular, and rock hard flight into the heart of the star destroyer, depicted as a huge sloping tunnel of girders and laser defences. At its heart is the reactor target.

DEATH STAR

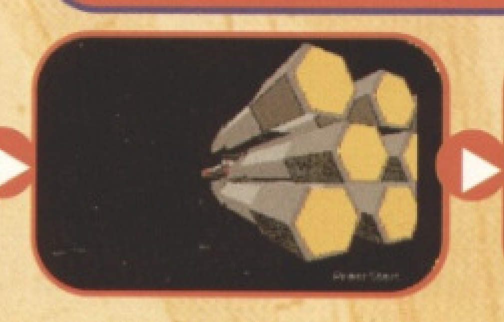
Multiple missions for the climax to the Arcade game, with TIE Fighter dogfights, surface targets, and of course a trip down the trench to fire those torpedoes into that letterbox of an exhaust port.











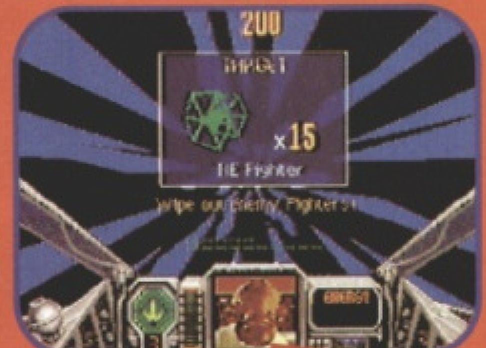


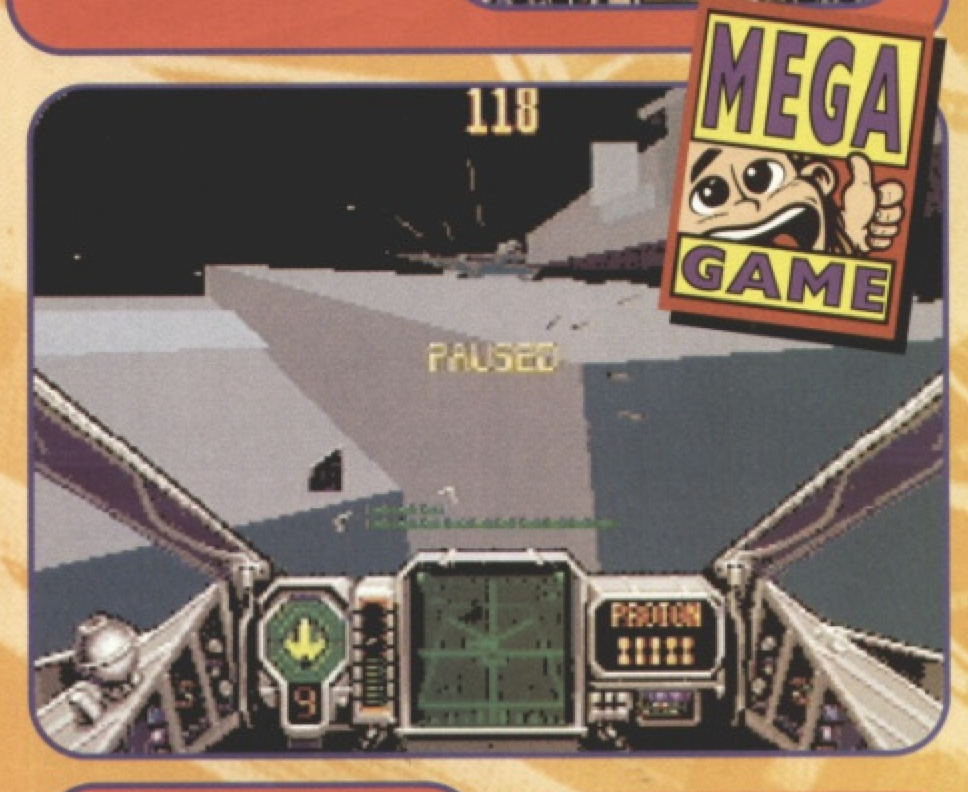




commander mudskipper

Each mission is preceded with a brief broadcast by Admiral Ackbar, Commander-in-chief of Rebel Forces. As you swirl through the beautiful patterns of hyperspace, a rotating wire-frame image is transmitted, briefing you on the mission goal.





we're hit

Star Wars 32X has music like you have never heard on the Megadrive. The celebrated main theme scored by John Williams plays at the beginning, but the showstopper is the FX gamut, capturing the spirit of movies, with screeching TIE Fighters, screaming lasers and the fabulous noise of R2 D2 howling when you take some serious damage.





COMMENT



STEVE

The Star Wars coin-op was a visual feast but was too short and easy for its own good. This 32X version combats this by adding more stages which — whilst generally involving blasting TIE Fighters — ensures the game will last longer than its coin-op cousin. Fans of the arcade game will be well made up with this conversion as all the features of the original are there. The update may be a little jerkier and the action often a little confusing, but this is a stunning game to look at and a frenetic blast to boot. The icing on the cake, though, is the two-player dual control mode which is ace. The perfect 32X debut.

COMMENT



GUS

It was only a couple of months ago that Steve and I were invited to view the first Virtua Star Wars in the arcade, and here it is on the Megadrive, bold as brass and a fraction of the price. I will not pretend the coin-op is my favourite game of all time, in fact I would see it as the least successful of the Virtua games, but the achievement of this conversion surpasses the leap that the Virtua Racing cart made from previous Megadrive games. This is a fully-fledged polygon game, and the graphics are not only detailed and convincing, but they move at incredible speed. TIE Fighters really do screech out the screen at you, and the Death Star looms in all its menacing glory. The sound also sets new standard for Sega owners, who couldn't ask for better samples, although the in-game music is weedy compared to the title track. My main concern in anticipating the game was longevity. Steve and I finished the coin-op within a single slush puppy. But be clear that even the arcade mode is ROCK HARD, for one or both players, and the extended version is too difficult if anything. It's extremely taxing getting to grips with sections like the Star Destroyer tunnel, though progress is slowly made. The biggest surprise is just how much more fun it is with a co-pilot: unmissable. It's amazing to think this is the first real Star Wars game after five years of the Megadrive, but it's arrived with a bang.

GRAPHICS 95

▲ Thousands of polygons go together to produce a moving masterpiece that is a tribute both to the film and the arcade game.

SOUND 93

▲ Samples and title music of clarity that Megadrive owners will never have experienced. Incredibly atmospheric.
▼ The in-game music is thinly textured.

PLAYABILITY 92

▲ Impulsive, compulsive, utterly reflex-based and constantly demanding. The ultimate trigger experience.

LASTABILITY 84

▲ Very, very difficult, and it's the epitome of the game you come back to again and again for a quick spin.
▼ Not many stages in the arcade version of the game.

VFM 89

▲ A £6000 arcade cabinet transformed into a £50 cart, and this is the first Star Wars title for the Megadrive.

OVERALL 90

A stunning debut for the 32X, with a great feel and atmosphere. A whopper with extra relish for those who like their action-to-go.





MICKEY MANIA GRIPS THE NATION

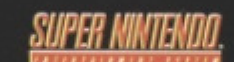


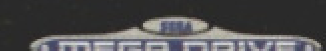
"Better looking than my girlfriend"
Dominik Diamond – Gamesmaster & Radio 1

90% MEGA

90% SEGA POWER

90% C&VG





MEGA-CD



WORK IN PROGRESS

If you needed any indication that Sega are going for the gaming jugular with the 32X, Doom should provide one. Gus produced these psychotic ramblings after being affected by the game set to corrupt the Sonic generation...

Get ready to go down into the darkest corridors since EMAP towers, as Sega are preparing one of the first treats for the 32X — and once started, you may never see the light of day again. Doom, winner of Game of the Year award at the last ECTS, and certainly the sexiest PC product ever, is due to hit the streets along with the new unit — and ensure the 32X hits the ground running.

For those woeful enough to be unfamiliar with Doom, it's a state-of-the-art interpretation of one of the oldest game concepts, the 3D dungeon quest. Except, instead of messing about with magic spells and talking dwarves, Doom hands you a gun (if you don't like that one find some of your own) and a reason to live: killing. In Doom it's either kill or be killed. Happily, it's a rather fun pastime.

You play a lone cadet, unfortunate enough to be stranded on Phobos, one of the moons of Mars and probably the unsafest place in the universe. Each terror-tricken and labyrinthine level has a single exit for you to locate, although the diversions of secret levels and puzzles to solve are common to nearly every stage. You view the levels in the first-person, gun poking out in front of you. There are stairs, dark areas, narrow bridges and open areas. By each lurk a range of hideous monsters, which increase in power and ferocity as you progress to each of the three distinct areas of the game.





At the moment, 15 levels of the original Doom were accessible to play, with the game standing at 24MEG. It is unclear how many more of the PC version's 27 levels will be added, although there is talk of the game being hiked to 32MEG. In any case, Doom looks like being a worthy title to launch the 32X, and with its anarchic and frenzied theme, is set to redefine console gaming as potentially not 'family entertainment'.

PROJECT
DOOM

PUBLISHER
SEGA

INITIATED
FEBRUARY '94

RELEASE
NOVEMBER '94

FORMAT
32X

DEVELOPERS
ID SOFTWARE

WELCOME TO YOUR DOOM

Sega have been quick off the mark with Doom, cramming a prestige product, only released in March on its original format, into a punishing nine month programming cycle. Progress in the latter stages has been rapid, which is demonstrated by the change between the version of Doom exhibited at September's ECTS, and the advanced copy shown to MEAN MACHINES at Sega. The former was disappointingly jerky and lacking in resolution, but re-writing of routines, has upgraded the game to be more than a match for its PC progenitor.

The philosophy that dreamt up Doom is interesting in itself. It's the work of a small Texas developer called Id software. The team there had originally worked for a larger company called Apogee, and had produced a highly-successful 3D hunt 'n' shoot with a Colditz type setting called Wolfenstein (a Megadrive version was planned but scrapped by Imagineer).

However, the rather eerie figures of John Romero and Sandy Petersen had an idea which would cause more than the ripple of outrage that Wolfenstein's animal shooting and full frontal bullet wounds aroused. They developed the Doom idea to push both player and machine to the limit. The game demands 32-bit processing because of its speed and smoothness while dealing with complex bit-mapped textures used in dungeon graphics. For players it's a kick up the backside, especially PC owners used do a succession of dreary 'interactive movies' and slow-moving adventures.

The 32X version compares well, easily matching the speed of a 486 33Mhz PC, running on high detail. Sega point to reports that the latest Stateside versions can perform as well as a 50Mhz PC, for which we are talking a good £1300, and that's before you stick a sound card in the trolley mater.



LET THE BLOOD RUN FREE

If anything stands out about Doom it's the amount of death that's involved. It's both desirable and enjoyable to kill everything that moves, and the visuals have unprecedented impact, especially at close range, with recoiling victims, rupturing bullets and blood-soaked corpses left as a mark of your progress. Ethically, it does have an 'aliens' scenario, but most enemies are humanoid and detailed. Doom was generally seen as an adult game on the PC, but the 32X brings into a new market. One thing the programmers have ring-fenced for inclusion is the full complement of Doom weapons. Starting with a single pistol, prospects look up as you stumble across shotguns, machine-guns, rockets and the ultimate weapon: a chainsaw, with which to embark on a sickening massacre. Sega marketing manager, Mark Mazlovich eagerly brings attention to inclusion of all five play modes, which covers all ranges of gaming skill. The worst of the — Nightmare mode has already assumed an infamous reputation for Doom players, basically as a reckless spree of mutilation and mayhem!

▲ *GWR Tip: Point gun at moving thing. Fire gun until movement stops.*

▼ *New graphics ideas for later levels.*

DOOM MERCHANTS

No liberties are being taken with a game many would see needs no improvement. Some small changes to the graphics have been implemented, with the aim of giving the variety and immediacy demanded of a console game. One level uses wooden textures and cobbled floors to create a mediaeval effect. This is set to be a custom Doom, with a unique 32X character. Sega would be delighted if the game had the same effect on 32X owners as it has on some PC players. Doom gossip is rife throughout PC mags, and the sequel is causing a stir in circles more used to getting excited over extended memory and PC Drivers. Whatever they might be. There is even a lavish 300 page guide book* publishee, with strategies, insights and reflections on the Doom 'phenomenon'

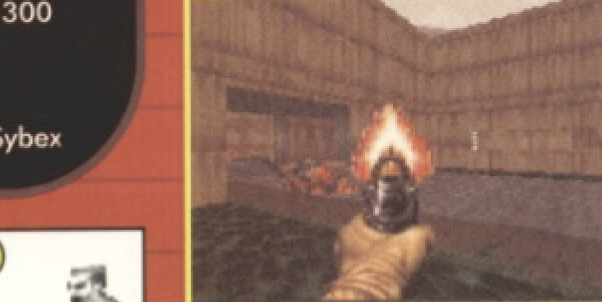
* 'Doom: Survivor's strategies and secrets', Joe Mendoza, Sybex



▲ *The inclusion of stairs and elevation has a bearing on the gameplay.*



▲ *There's danger lurking behind every blast door.*



















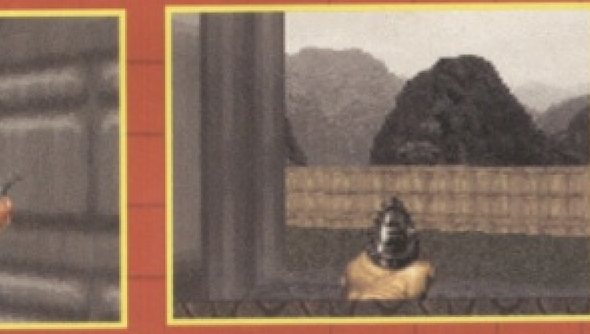


▲ *Doom bestiary: A; Demon. B; Cacodemon. C; Imp. D; Former human. E; Cyberdemon. F; Baron of Hell.*













SENSLESS VIOLENCE

One nice thing about the 32X version is you don't have to worry about loading, and you don't need to fiddle with soundcards. Many PC owners missed out on the atmospheric aural effects, that accompany your actions. Explosions and ricochets as you'd expect, but sound is used to create suspense and induce fear — often you can hear approaching monsters before they appear. The pumping soundtrack also puts you right in the mood for murder.

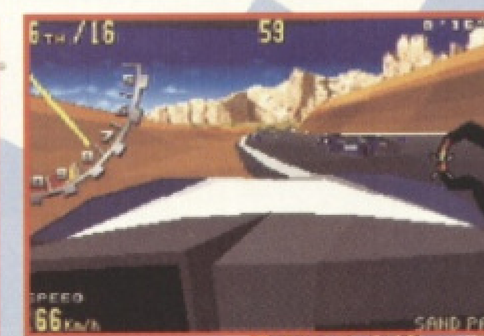


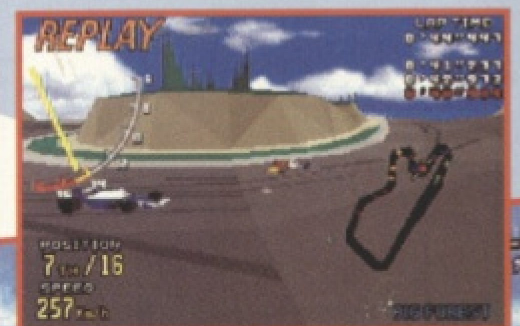


V.R. Virtua Racing DELUXE

After the technological triumph of Sega's Megadrive conversion of Virtua Racing, it's fitting that the 32X 'Deluxe' version should be one of the first games to flex the newly gained muscle of the 32X unit. This November, buyers of the upgrade will be offered an extended version of Virtua Racing, for less than the top-heavy SVP cartridge retailing at £70.

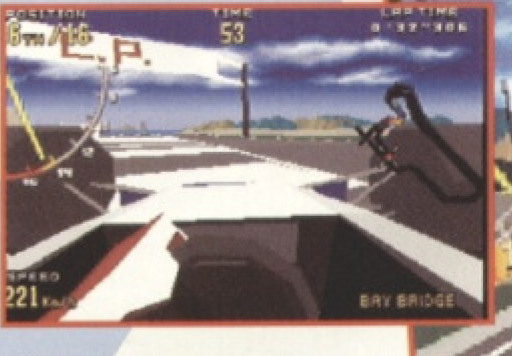
Virtua Racing was first released at the end of 1992, exhibiting the blistering power of a new generation of Sega coin-op machiness. Unknown at the time, Virtua Racing was the first step in Sega's arcade and console strategy that has led to Daytona, Virtua Star Wars, Virtua Fighter and Virtua Cop in the arcades, and the 32X and Saturn machines in the home, with their staggeringly close conversions.





As you can see, the Deluxe version recreates Virtua Racing on the Megadrive to a new standard of authenticity. Gone is the cross-hatching and jerkiness of the Megadrive graphics. Thousands of extra polygons, more colours and faster frame rate produce a smoother, cleaner and more detailed conversion. Some of the landscaping features omitted from the Megadrive are back in, and the four viewing angles are more spectacular than ever, with polygon hands included.





What you cannot see, are the fabulous enhancements to sound — crisp samples (including a barber's quartet celebrating your victory!) and music of the quality of the coin-op. Happily, Sega have included the extra features offered on the previous home conversion — a two-player split-screen mode, mirror tracks and multi-angle replay awarded to finishers.

But, as Jimmy Cricket used to say to his eternal shame, there's more: new tracks to play on and new cars to play on them with, which is what the crew are doing now...









SPOILER TACTICS

Now you have not one but three cars to race, on a rotating polygon selection screen. In addition to the formula car is a stock car and, the mysterious and outlandish-looking prototype car. All have different max. speeds, but also quite different handling. The stock car is particularly fun to take cornering, as the end flies right out! The prototype seems to glide across the courses like some kind of batmobile, and is just the ticket for those who have the formula car under the thumb. The choice of car also seems to affect the opposition — other racers in stock cars seem much more eager to have a racing rumble. It's now also possible to visibly damage parts of your car (eg. the prototype's aerofoil), which requires a pit stop.







COURSES AVAILABLE





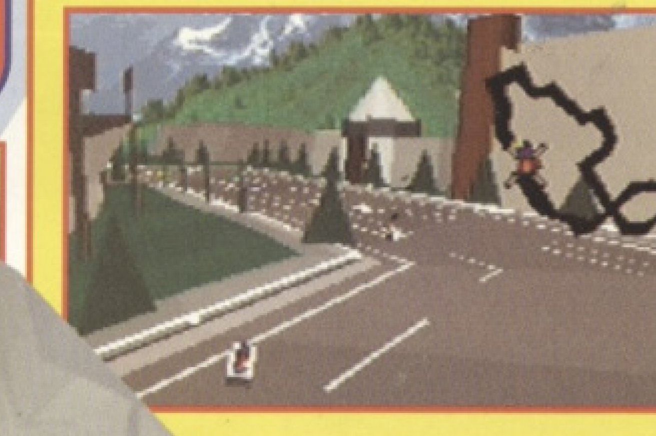




▲ *The track selection screen is presented as a series of revolving isometric layouts — a bit like the prizes on 'Wheel of Fortune'. Feast your eyes on the two additions.*

PASTURES NEW

The most appealing new feature of Virtua Racing is the new tracks. Two extra full-length courses, called 'Highland' and 'Sand Park'. Highland takes Virtua Racing into an urban setting for the first time, the course flanked by some huge polygon buildings, and incorporating a motorway and approach roads. Sand Park is even more of a departure, with a series of spectacular terrain features, including a towering drive-through a rock outcrop, and a tunnel with a you've-got-to-be-joking bend in it. There's even a choice of routes, where the road temporarily splits in two. The processing power of the 32X has been employed to add a little imagination to Virtua Racing's repertoire.







1 PLAYER	
RELEASE	JANUARY
BY	BMG
PRICE	TBA
GAME TYPE	SHOOT 'EM UP

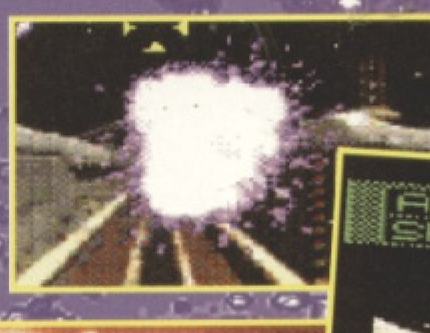
PERCENT COMPLETE

LOADS

THE LEGEND OF TULL

According to Sega newcomers Rocket Science, the currency of the future isn't dollars, pounds, or thirty queeg notes, it's camels. And as they've got the likes of Ron Cubb (screen writer for moderate hits like Alien, Total Recall and True Lies) and coding veteran Brian Moriaty (the geezer behind the Zork series) working on this CD look into a world of moonbases and other such sci-fi gubbins, we're stuffed if we're going to argue.

Loadstar is set in the 22nd century, with the player pulling on the driving gloves of ace smuggler, Tully Bodine, who has accepted his most dodgy assignment yet — smuggling the aforementioned humped currency off the moon. However, the traffic congestion within the moonbase's many roads and tunnels makes rush hour in London look like a Sunday jaunt to Littlehampton. As you roar through the FMV roadways, numerous hazards and road blocks stand in your way, and the police are in hot pursuit...





▼ *Filter or no filter, mild or light.*

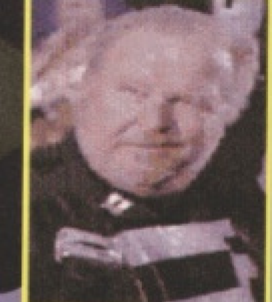
IN THIS WEEK'S EPISODE...

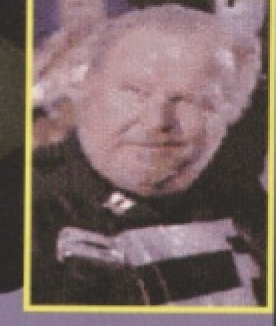
With Loadstar, the guys at Rocket Science are the latest team to attempt to create an interactive movie for the Mega-CD. Amongst its cast of relative unknowns, one face is immediately recognisable: that of Ned Beatty as the spluttering Sheriff Wompler. Ok, so he's not as well known as, say, Tom Cruise or Chris Evans, but if you've seen any of the Superman films you'll recognise him — he plays Lex Luthor's bumbling sidekick, Otis. Loadstar opens with an impressive intro to set the scene with Tully welcomed on to the Moonbase by his oddball and decidedly dodgy mates as he enters a seedy bar, the interaction then continues as the plot unfolds and the game continues.



TAR

BODINE





CONTRAFLOWS

Tully's reactions need to be razor-sharp on this haul from hell. The lunar surface is criss-crossed by literally thousands of Magalev tracks, and where there are tracks there's trouble. As Tully, the player has the unenviable task of navigating the spaghetti-like junctions to avoid the usual assortment of hauling hazards, rival truckers, traffic accidents, debris, and dead-ends. As if this wasn't enough, the cops are onto your case and intend to liberally pepper the truck with plasma blasts to bring your smuggling days to an untimely end.





▲ *Makes a change from security alerts, leaves on the line and toxic egg sarnies.*

I LOVE TRUCKING AND I LOVE TO TRUCK!

Based on an original design from the 1980's Birmingham International Airport passenger ferrying sensation, our hero's Magalev rig is powered by magnetic force. Resting on a delicate balance of magnetism, hits from the cops and debris have the knock-on effect of reducing the clearance between the track and truck leading to some nasty scrapes.





ARTIC-ULATION

Forced to run the gauntlet at break-neck speed, Tully is required to keep a hand on the wheel and another on the trigger. As with many Mega-CD interactive flicks, the player controls the crosshairs which act as both route changer and weapon targeting device for the Magalev. Speed is of the essence as a missed turning, or more importantly a missed cop spells doom.







POWER DRIVE

You may be surprised to learn that haring along country roads in the middle of the night at reckless speeds in driving rain is not illegal, at least not if you're a rally driver, which forms the basis of US Gold's new driving game Powerdrive. In a change from the outrageous formula cars of most race games, you get to push turbo charged Mini Coopers, Renault Clios and Fiat's dinky Cinquecento.

Set on a series of time-trialled country roads, your main opposition is the clock, with some demanding time limits set for qualification to the later stages. The layouts pose their own problem, almost constant chicanes, bends and hairpins.

Mastering the control of various rally vehicles also makes its own demands, as each is designed to handle in a realistic inertial manner. The courses vary in scenery detail, from bumpy forest tracks to flat desert dustbowls, and both linear and lap courses are set. In line with creating the atmosphere of the sport, spectators line the route, cones get in the way and yes, you do get stuck on the verge and have to reverse out sometimes. Weather is another changing aspect, driving rain posing a minor inconvenience and falling snow causing real control problems on the frozen forest tracks, which have to be sorted out in the bodyshop more often than not.

US Gold still have things to do on Powerdrive, and in its favour is the lack of competition in the rally game stakes, except perhaps from Sega's own dismal Double Clutch. With an early new year release on the cards, MEAN MACHINES will be following this one with interest.

▲ Driver: Torvill; Navigator: Dean.

DRIVEN BY YOU

What would a Powerdrive be without power-ups? Helpful icons litter the track and its to your advantage if you can pick them as you pass. The clock icon stop the lap timer for a short period, the 'N' icon provides a powerful (though hard to control) burst of speed, and money is added to your winnings for spending on repairs between races, as damage is accumulated in percentage terms.



▼ You can't have any of that yellow pastic stuff on your headlights, mind.



WHEN I STRIKE THE DASHBOARD...

Dotted among the high speed thrashing tracks are those designed to test your refined driving skills. There is still a time limit for these 'Kickstart' style courses, but a pass flag must be issued before you can continue:



VEHICLE STOP

You must stop over the line and wait for the adjudicator's flag.



REVERSE MANEOUVRE

Like parking at Tesco's, reverse your car into the designated box.



CONE SPIRAL

Negotiate the cone-lined spiral and stop on the marked area.


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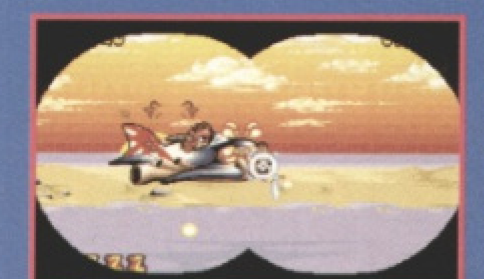


ZERO THE KAMIKAZE SQUIRREL

Not content with a cameo appearance as a bad guy in Sunsoft's Aero The Acrobat, Zero (The Kamikaze Squirrel) has wangled a starring role in the latest platform extravaganza from Sunsoft. Having given up evil after failing miserably to bomb Aero out of existence, Zero has returned to his forest homeland only to find it menaced by an evil lumberjack called Jacques Le Sheets who plans to turn it into matchsticks!

Having been forced to land on a nearby beach after his plane was shot by an unknown sniper, Zero must make his way trough the game's seven stages, picking off the many baddies who inhabit the island's mountains, rivers and factories. Killing these baddies is effected using Zero's famed diving skills which allow him to swoop down an any unsuspecting targets, and if this tactic fails he also has a handy stash of throwing stars to lob about.

At the time of writing (about 12:30 on a Wednesday), Zero hadn't been given a release date, but we'll keep you posted.



▲ *Shoot the squirrel! Dive, dive, dive!*



▲ *"Didn't I see you in Gunstar Heroes? Third boss from the right?".*



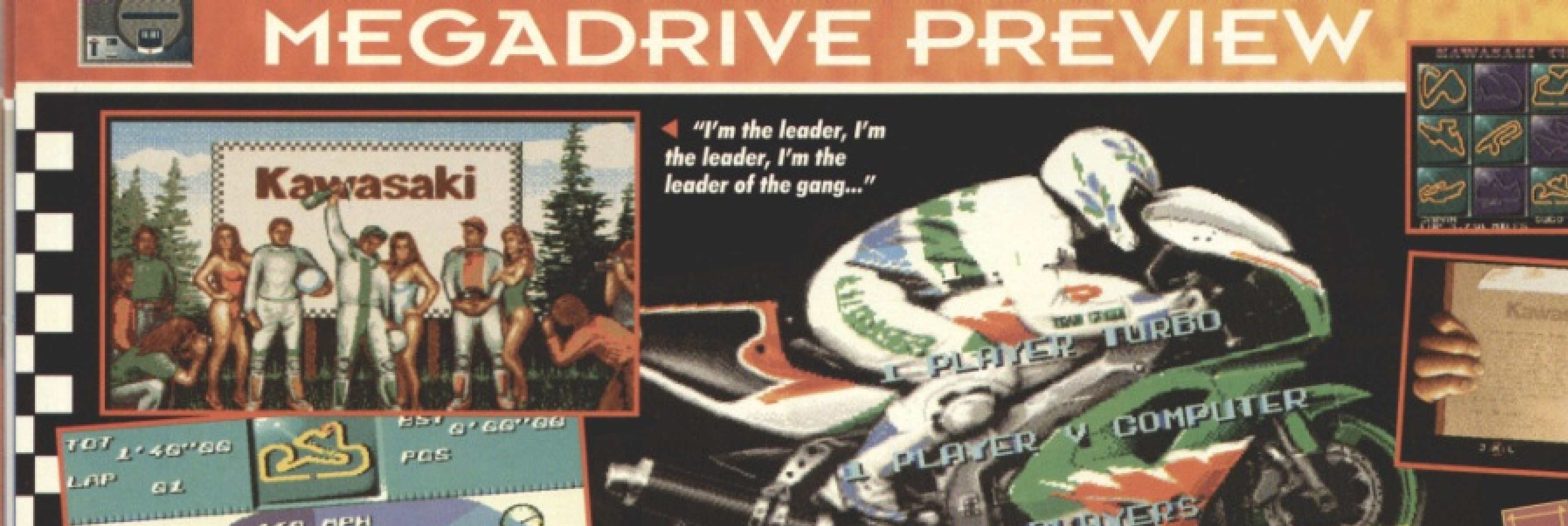




HE SWOOPS HE SCORES

In addition to his swooping skills, Zero also has a rather nifty dive move at his disposal. Pressing the C button sends our hero into a jaw-cracking dive which, initially, seems rather pointless. However, scattered around the play area are a series of signs marked 'Super Dive Tests.' Whenever Zero sees one of these it means he must perform a breath-taking dive which combines the aforementioned plummet move with a carefully-timed swoop — sending our hero past any hazards in an amazing U-shaped turn!


FROM THE DIRECTOR OF 'HIGHLANDER'
ALEC BALDWIN
"The wittiest action-adventure since 'Indiana Jones'!"
NBC NEWS
The Glamour
The Mystery
The Danger
The Shadow
12
UNIVERSAL PICTURES PRESENTS A BREGMAN/BAER
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EDITED BY PETER HONESS PRODUCTION DESIGNER JOSEPH NEMEC III
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ROLF DEYHLE LOUIS A. STROLLER WRITTEN BY DAVID KOEPP
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STARTS NOVEMBER 18TH AT CINEMAS EVERYWHERE



◀ *"I'm the leader, I'm the leader, I'm the leader of the gang..."*

Kawasaki SUPERBIKE CHALLENGE

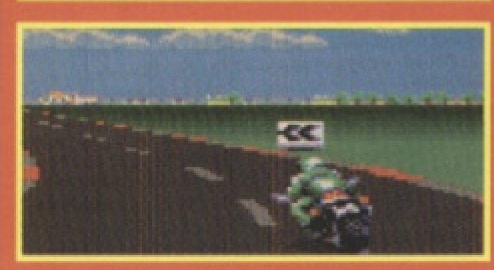
The jagged polygon visuals of last year's racing hit F1 make a reappearance in Time Warner's new professional motorbike sim, Kawasaki Superbikes. Not that surprising when you understand that both games are the work of developers Lankhor.

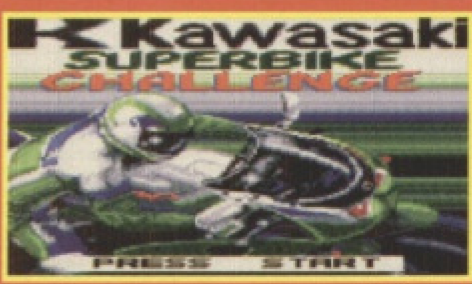
In common with F1, Kawasaki SB features a first-person perspective for single player racing, with a split-screen option for pairs, or duelling with a single computer racer. There is also the same 'Turbo' option that accelerates the polygon graphics to reckless speeds, and is strictly for pro racers.

However, this isn't just going to turn out to be F1 with two wheels missing. The screen update and number of polygons are greater than any previous Megadrive racer (bar the SVP-boosted Virtua Racing), allowing complex structures and tunnels to be added to the track design. Also the handling of the bike has been tweaked to match the world-famous Japanese machines — Team Kawasaki add their endorsement.

With 15 global tracks, including the inimitable Suzuka 8 Hours tournament, fitting into a constructors championship, fifteen other racers, pit-stops and qualifiers, nothing of any value to speed freaks is being omitted. The developers originally toyed with the idea of Full Motion

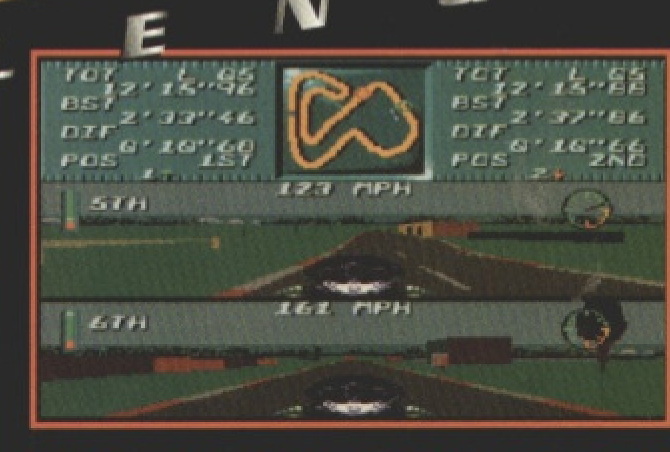






MINI WHEELS

Kawasaki Superbikes on Game Gear will be out around the same time, but as these shots will tell you, it's a completely different game. In fact, it's being put together by another developer, Teque, and will have unique game features like an 'arcade' mode, and prize money used to improve bike performance.



TURNED OUT NICE AGAIN

Weather plays a significant part in Kawasaki SB, with you often 'meteorologically challenged' in your races. Rain, of course, makes for treacherous driving conditions and tyres should be chosen accordingly. However, weather conditions may change in the course of a race, so watch for changes in the sky. The final game will also feature bike damage, where minor collisions gradually reduce handling, top speed and acceleration unless repaired.

1-2 PLAYER

16 MEG

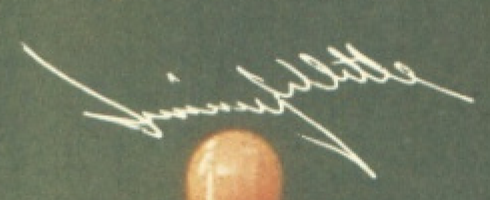
RELEASE	JANUARY
BY	TIME WARNER
PRICE	TBA
GAME TYPE	DRIVNG

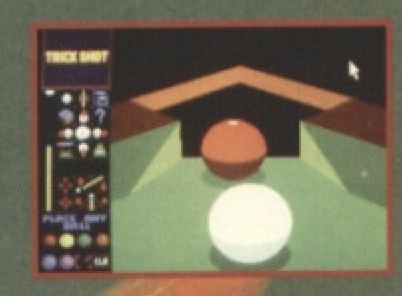
PERCENT COMPLETE

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★ COMPATIBLE WITH THE SEGA MOUSE ★ OVER 164 MILLION POSSIBLE OUTCOMES FROM ANY SHOT.

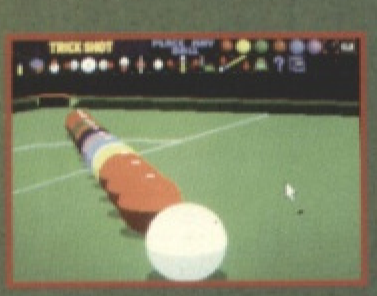
★ ROTATE AND ZOOM IN ON ANY BALL ★ USE SWEREVE AND SPIN - BUT CHALK THAT CUE!

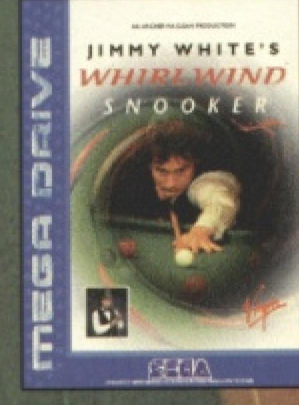
★ INFINITE TABLE SETTINGS - EVERY PACK IS UNIQUE ★ INCLUDES MATCH, PRACTICE, TRICK SHOT AND DEMO MODES

★ 4 SKILL LEVELS ★ DIGITISED SOUND EFFECTS AND APPLAUSE ★ TABLE NOT INCLUDED







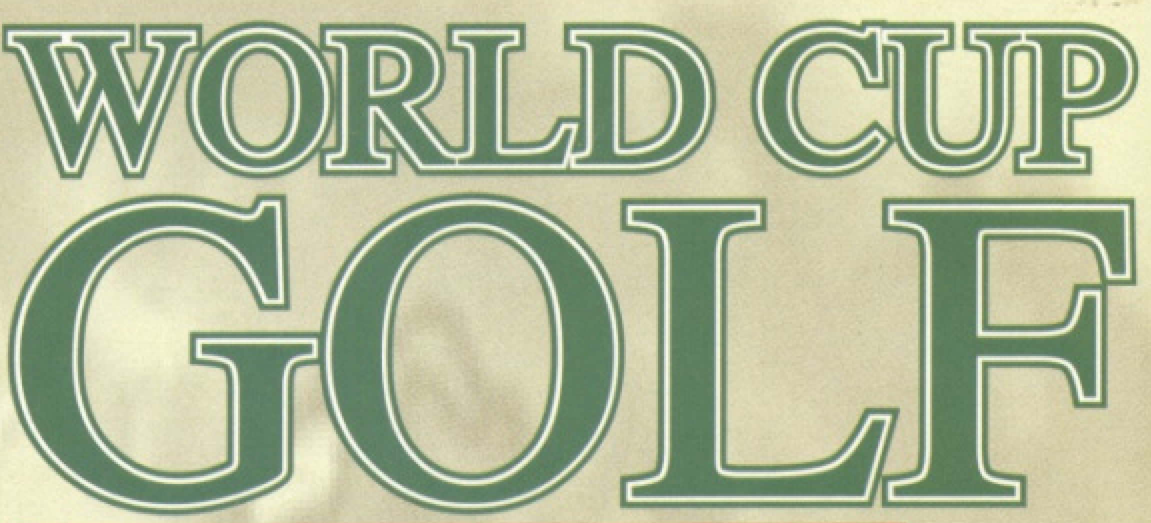




THE GAME THEY SAID COULDN'T BE DONE





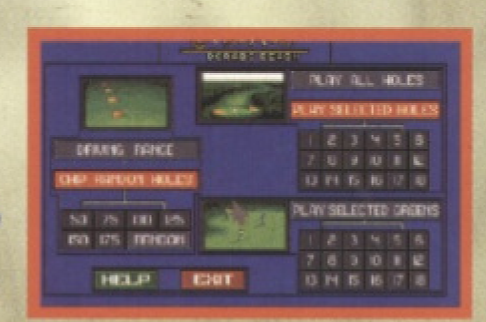


The Megadrive is no stranger to golf games, being perhaps the 'Brucie ' or 'Tarby' of the celebrity console world. Sega owners have numerous rounds, from Jack Niklaus to PGA Tour to choose from. But US Gold aim to steal a march on them all with their Mega-CD specific World Cup Golf.

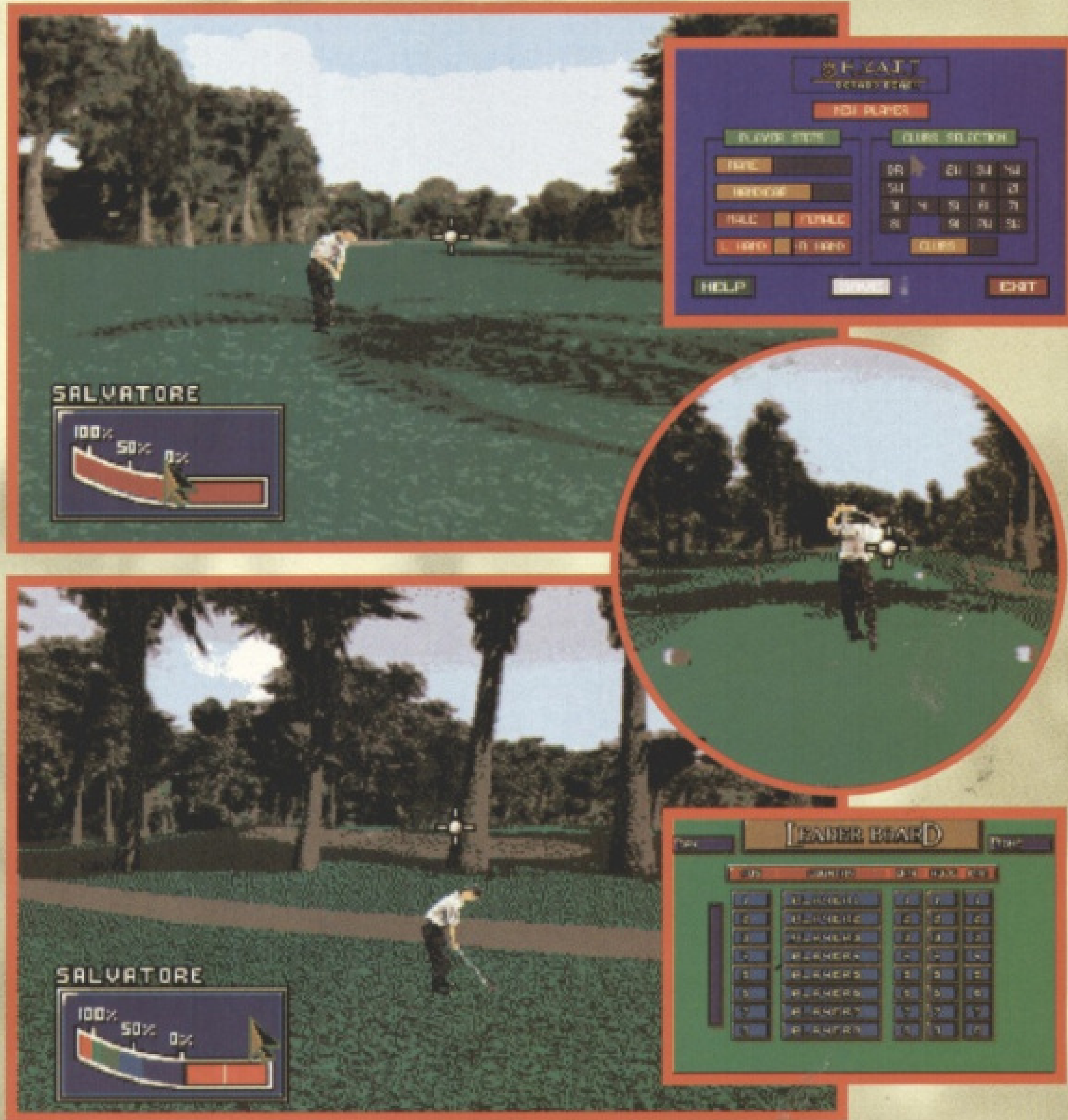
The game has been developed for no less than five CD-ROM formats, using digitised renderings of the exotic Hyatt Dorado golf course in Puerto Rico. Using silicon graphics workstations and a 3D modelling package, the development team have managed to recreate every palm and probably every rabbit-dropping on the course.

The immense amount of data needed for the images explains why the game is restricted to the CD format. The game also boasts a massive 64 player tournament option, more players than would fit into the average living room! The comprehensiveness continues with menus for fifteen different tournament options, and the creation and saving of custom players.

Our perusal of World Cup Golf was somewhat curtailed by the large amount of programming still to be done, but the structure of the game is definitely there. Particularly, the main sprite is to be totally restyled, so don't be alarmed at how he affects the perspective in these shots. Just relax, close your eyes and think of warm sandy golf links. World Cup Golf is reviewed next month in MEAN MACHINES.

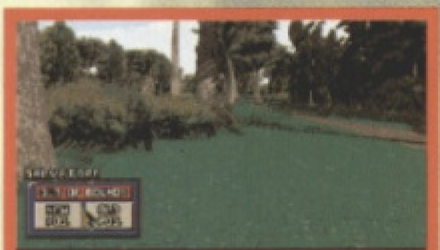


▼ *Gavin failed to notice that the rest of the course hadn't been cut.*









▲ *Aaaaaah! Boy do I need this. I was really bursting...*

GOING CLUBBIN'

Actual play is effected by a series of windows and menus, keeping the action on the screen, without flicking to sub-menus. Everything from stance to spin is adjustable, you can even check the lie of the course (any part, not just the green) by using a Mysteron-esque floating contour. The final version will have a 'live' flight window to capture your soaring balls!

PAULS TIPS



This month is truly Top of the Tips with some outstanding hints and cheats landing on the MEAN MACHINES doormat to wow and amaze you. And as if this wasn't enough, there are two player's guides, Time Warner's Red Zone and Accolade's Zero Tolerance.
No time for chat though, as there's tipping to be doing! Don't forget to send in your essential tips to the essential tips pages here at: A TIPSTER IN LOVE, MEAN MACHINES SEGA, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. Hoorah!

MORTAL [K]

HI-HO, HI-HO, IT'S OFF TO CHEAT WE GO!



The Jungle Book



CHANGE COLOUR SCHEME AND FACE SHERE KAHN

Conor Armstrong from Dublin has uncovered some really groovy keypad presses to alter the course of Mowgali's travels. Start the game as normal and PAUSE before entering these codes.
A, B, B, A, C, A, B, B – To change the colour scheme up to 7 times before it returns to normal.
A, C, A, C, A, C, A, C, B, B, B, B – Face Shere Kahn with 1 life. But to face the mighty tiger with full lives and continues, a combination of the two previous codes (ie. A, C, A, C, A, C, A, C, B, B, B, B, A, B, B, A, C, A, B, B) should do the trick.



KOMBAT

You've had the preview, the review, the players' guide and now we have the cheats thanks to Daniel Hughes of Shipston-on-Stow. Hidden within the OPTIONS mode is a secret TEST MODE accessible by placing the cursor on DONE and entering LEFT, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, DOWN, RIGHT, LEFT, LEFT, RIGHT, RIGHT on the D-Pad. Go to TEST MODE, and from here you can choose from the following fantastic options.



NO DAMAGE TO PLAYER ONE
NO DAMAGE TO PLAYER TWO
1 HIT KILLS PLAYER ONE
1 HIT KILLS PLAYER TWO
FREEPLAY – Unlimited credits
BACKGROUND ADJUST – Choose from any location
BATTLE PLAN ADJUST – Choose from any opponent
SOAK TEST – Watch your favourite 12 fighters slog it out in a demo mode with a twist. The twist being you can delight in them performing either Fatalities, Babalities, or Friendships at your leisure.

OOH, NASTY! –

A rather an unusual feature that allows you to perform a whole new Finishing Move entitled a "Fergality". Pick Rayden as your character, and in the last round use only kicks. When the Finish Him/Her appears, press BACK, BACK, BACK, and BLOCK to morph the loser into a digitised image of Fergus McGovern, the Managing Director of Probe.

SONIC SPINBALL

BILLIONS OF POINTS!

Here's a quickie for the pinballing blue hedgehog, courtesy of James Perry from Sevenoaks. After defeating a boss character, hold down A, B, and C, and witness your score shoot through the roof!





MEGA-LO-MANIA

EPOCH CODES

Priding himself as being something of a strategist, Craig Withers originating from Cumbernauld, has pieced together the codes up to Epoch Nine. They are as follows.

EPOCH	CODE
2	SZADBYFIWMY
3	RXYCPUCXCBC
4	UXFDUYCXHTS
5	ORNDHTXKQTE
6	HJOBHBNYRHO
7	XANBRUAFLII
8	BTBAHOSHLIL
9	BLOAZFBGHBI



What's more, for a hidden game of Sinistar, simply enter the code JOOLS

URBAN STRIKE

CAMPAIGN CODES

A sterling effort on the part of Gary Rudland from Feltham, Middlesex, for completing this 'copter-athon in only two days and bunging me the codes for all the campaigns.

CAMPAIGN 1 – HAWAII
CAMPAIGN 2 – BAJA OILS RIGS CR7C9LB7CHX
CAMPAIGN 3 – FIGHT ON FOOT AS 2
CAMPAIGN 4 – MEXICO 9GR63XYWVXL
CAMPAIGN 5 – SAN FRANCISCO NWDR7SKB7S9
CAMPAIGN 6 – FIGHT ON FOOT AS 5
CAMPAIGN 7 – NEW YORK L67KGRPFGR3
CAMPAIGN 8 – LAS VEGAS GPVSYNGJYNX
CAMPAIGN 9 – FIGHT ON FOOT AS 8
CAMPAIGN 10 – UNDERGROUND W7SKLP7CDPT





MEGADRIVE

SUPER STREET FIGHTER II
EASY SKIP TO CPU M. BISON





If you're finding the going tough against the likes of Cammy and Co., here's a tidy, if not sneaky tippet to the top and the final fight with Bison. Graham Kates from Chorleywood, Herts. Go through the normal selection process of choosing your character, but before beginning the bout, make sure a second joypad is plugged in. Once the fight has started and you know who the opponent is, grab the second joypad and hit START. Now using the second joypad, select the character you were previously fighting and finish them off. When the map screen pops up, the defeated opponent will have shaded to grey and the next combatant ready to do battle. Repeat the process until you face Bison, but be warned the cheat doesn't work on him.

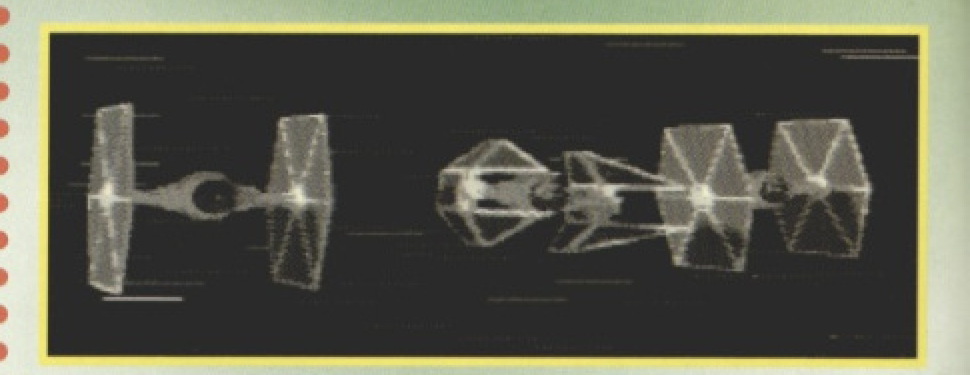
JUNGLE STRIKE
FOUR EXTRA LIVES

For those of you having a hard time with the Fuel Depot on Level 7, Darren Godfrey of Witney, Oxfordshire, steps in to help out. Enter the level (code:TMHPGCFDYRL) and fly up to just above the fuel drums. Hang a right, going past another Helipad until you come across four pyramids. Take out the two Gatling guns and then hit the pyramids where you will uncover the four extremely helpful extra lives. Cripes!





MEGA-CD



REBEL ASSAULT
LEVEL CODES

The unstoppable tips animal Paul Shotton from Stoke-on-Trent strikes again with the definitive guide to the visually stunning Star Wars spin-off. A huge pat on the back for such good work.

BEGGARS CANYON
EASY – BOSSK
NORMAL – BOTHN
HARD – BORDOK

ASTEROID
EASY – ENGRET
NORMAL – HERGLIC
HARD – SKYHX

CANYON RUN
EASY – RALRAA
NORMAL – LEENI
HARD – DEFEL

STAR DESTROYER
EASY – FRIJA
NORMAL – THRAWN
HARD – JEDGAR

TATOOINE ATTACK
EASY – LARRA
NORMAL – LWYLL
HARD – MADINE

ASTEROID FIELD
EASY – DERLIN
NORMAL – MAZZIC
HARD – TARKIN

IMPERIAL WALKERS
EASY – MOLTOK
NORMAL – JULPA
HARD – MOTHMA

STORM TROOPERS
EASY – MORAG
NORMAL – MORRT
HARD – GLAYYO

TRANSPORT
EASY – TANTISS
NORMAL – MUFTAK
HARD – OTTELZA

YAVIN TRINING
EASY – OSWAFL
NORMAL – RASKAR
HARD – RISH#

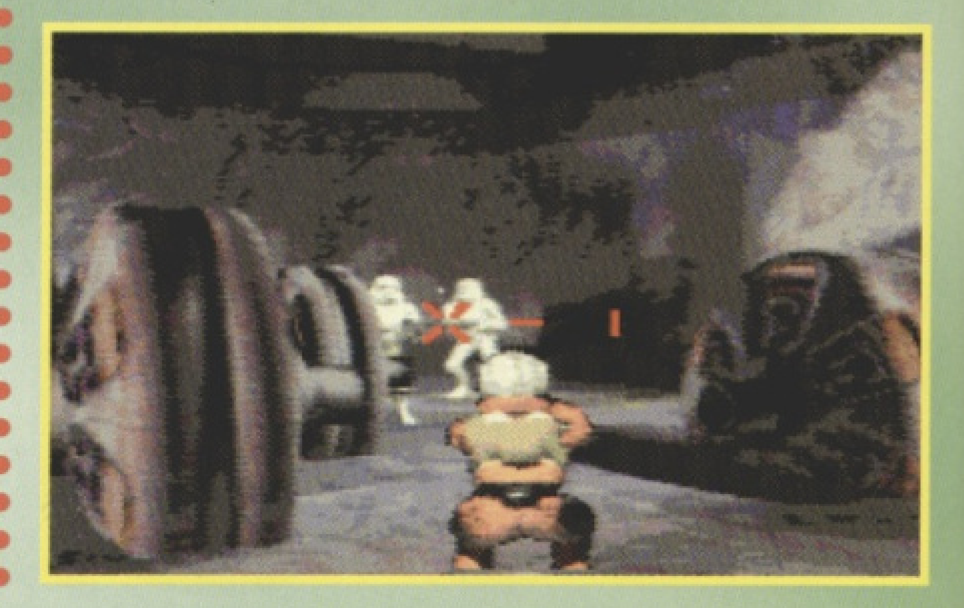
DEATH STAR
EASY – KLATTU
NORMAL – JHOFF
HARD – IZRINA

DEATH SURFACE
EASY – IRENEZ
NORMAL – ITHOR
HARD – KARRDE

CANNON
EASY – LIANNA
NORMAL – UNWAK
HARD – VONZELL

POWER RALLY
EASY – PAKKA
NORMAL – ORLOCK
HARD – OSSUS

TRENCH RUN
EASY – NORVAC
NORMAL – NKLLON
HARD – ?





TIME WARNER
INTERACTIVE



MEGA-CD



SOLUTION

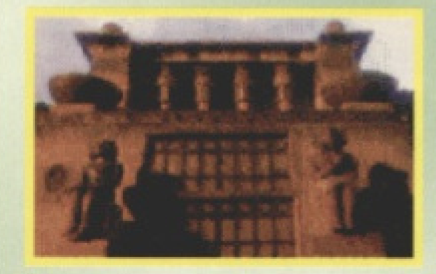
John Trudell's Number One fan, David Dent from North Shields, Tyne and Wear has been playing non-stop to bring us the complete solution for all three acts.

ACT I

Storage	Catch man power box
Storage	Catch man power box
Bruno	Get code
Grads	Get code
Band	Get code
Bruno	Catch Luigi punch
Alex	Get code

BONUS TRAPS

Dancer	Band
Bruno	Storage
Handyman	Bruno's room



ACT II

This is the main act. Try to catch as many people as possible, but check on each of the rooms so as not to miss any important information.

Bruno	Get trap
Grads	Get trap
Band	Catch man lamp
Alex	Catch man window
Grads	Dis-arm coffin – arm bands, catch mummy
Basement	Get trap
Bruno	Dis-arm – re-arm basket, catch mummy
Band	Get trap
Basement	Catch man elevator
Band	Dis-arm – re-arm cage, catch mummy
Alex	Get trap
Storage	Get trap
Basement	Catch Eddie conveyor
Storage	Catch Eddie phone
Alex	Dis-arm – re-arm chair, catch mummy

It is possible to trap Eddie (when he goes in Alex's room) with the fireplace trap. This does add to your total. Even though Eddie has told you to trap the handyman wherever possible, do not trap him as he shows you how to use new traps.

ACT III

Concentrate on this list and nobody else.

Storage	Catch woman power box
Lobby	Catch Eddie column
Basement	Catch Eddie conveyor
Alex	Catch Eddie chair
Basement	Catch man elevator
Grads	Catch Eddie bands
Storage	Catch man phone trap
Band	Catch Eddie cage

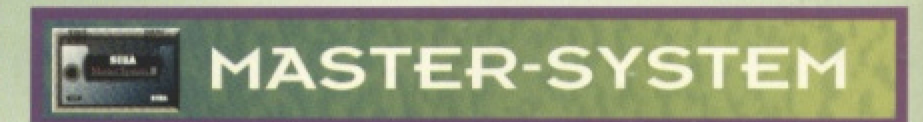


ROAD AVENGER

LEVEL SELECT AND DEMO MODE

Not a particularly stunning Mega-CD offering, but thanks to Anim Abbtar for the tips.
STAGE SELECT – Press up to select OPTIONS and go into screen where you press A six times.
DEMO MODE – As above, but press A five times and press B.





MASTER-SYSTEM

BUBBLE BOBBLE

SPECIAL CODES

For some extra special codes Simon Barberton from Countesthorpe, Leicestershire, is here to offer some assistance.
RLLRUDDR – One life
ULDLDUUL – Reveals all items
LULRLLDR – Shoes
RBUUUBBJ – Shoes, sweets, feathers
JJLBJRJL – Music select
LLBRDBDL – Shoes and sweets
DJBRBDBJ – Three lives
DJLBBDJJLDLDBJBB – Reveals all on each level
BLDUBUBU – Shoes, sweets, feathers, and three lives.



GAME GEAR

PUTT 'N' PUTTER

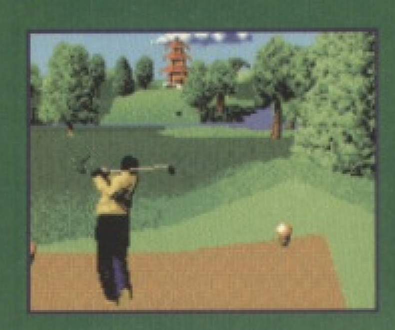
SECRET OPTIONS SCREEN

A tidy little Options Screen is available to those having a few problems from Stephen Brady in Cramlington, Northunmberland. Quite simply hold button 2 and START while turning on your Game Gear.





CHAMPION!
U.S. OPEN '94



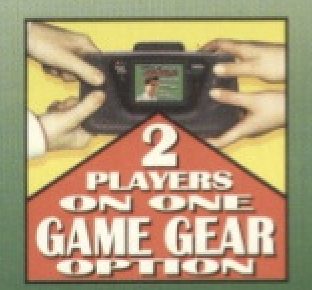


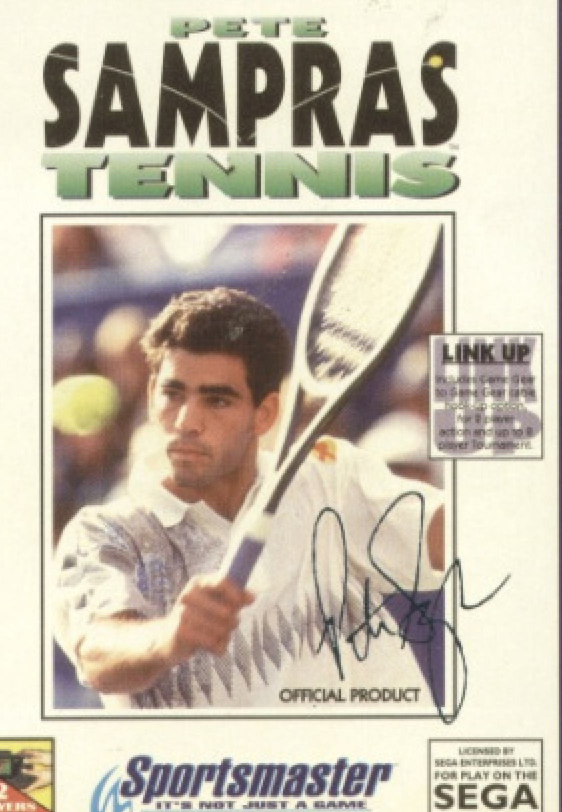

Includes 64K-BIT GRAPHICS CHIP

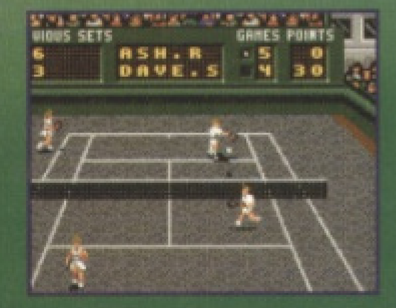
Challenge Ernie Els – the man with a drive like an Exocet – in this realistic and gripping golf experience. Compete on four 3D rendered courses, with rotoscoped player movement, and seven game styles. *Ernie Els Golf* is total golf.

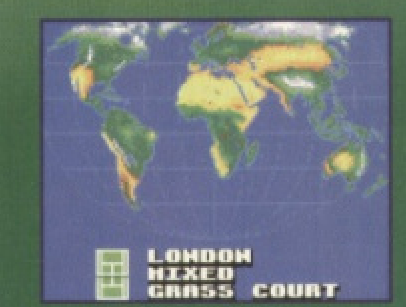
SPORTS GEAR

Pete Sampras' serves can turn a ball ballistic - fearsome forehands, blistering backhands and skillful lobs - this is pure tennis action! Complete with 30 different competitors and an innovative 2-player option. Prepare for a smash!











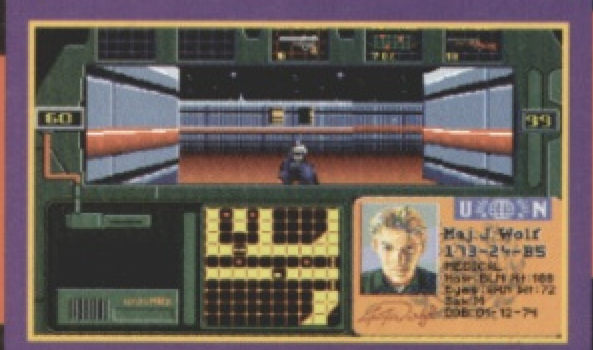
CHAMPION!
WIMBLEDON '94

ZERO TOLERANCE

We were quite literally blown away by Zero Tolerance a couple of months ago. But with a difficulty level set on 'Rock 'Ard', some assistance will be required to wade through the alien corpses and save the planet from the invading forces. Luckily Paul is here to lead you by the hand through some of the more difficult confrontations. But don't forget to keep your eyes and ears open, as you never know what's lurking round the next corner!

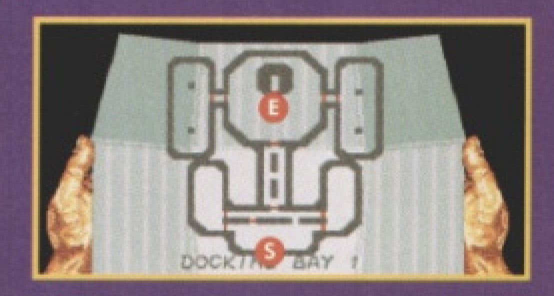
STEP-BY-STEP AEROBICS

Right, before embarking on the gun-fest it is absolutely essential to get tooled up. Remember the motto: Guns are fun, but tools are cool! Don't throw away useful items such as fire extinguishers unless you are completely certain you won't need them to progress. It is an absolute necessity to exterminate all of the aliens on every floor and in every nook and cranny. If you don't manage to do this, the boss won't appear at the end of the section.



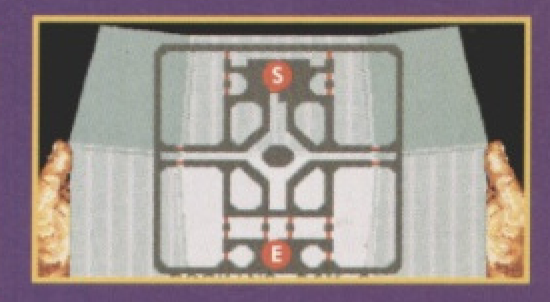
SPACE STATION

The first part of your quest to rid the world of invading alien forces. The going's not too tough, but beware of ambushes.



DOCKING BAY 1 - bnp8vt)ng

Grab the shotguns at the start, but avoid the rooms to the left and right as they contain loads of bad guys. Hang round the doors to pick off enemy attacks.

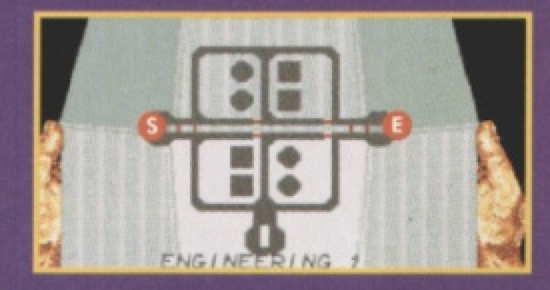


DOCKING BAY 2 - DDq8vtKug

The corner rooms are chocker with alien forces. Nip round the back of where you started to stock up on shotguns and medipaks.

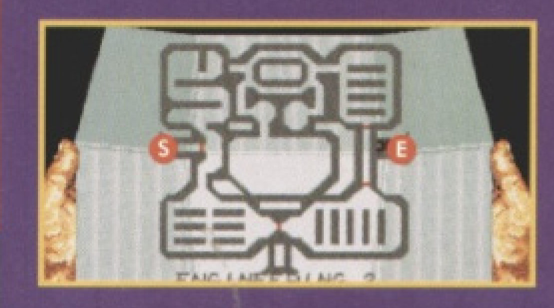
BRIDGE 1 - HFr8*tLng

A relatively easy stroll, but keep your guard when approaching corners.



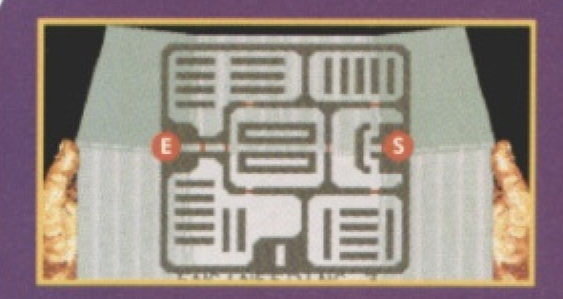
ENGINEERING 1 - Plb*uvPv6

Grab that flamethrower immediately as this is the first encounter with the crabs. These fellas scuttle along both the floor and the ceilings, pick them off as soon as you spot them. A wall of flames is the trick.



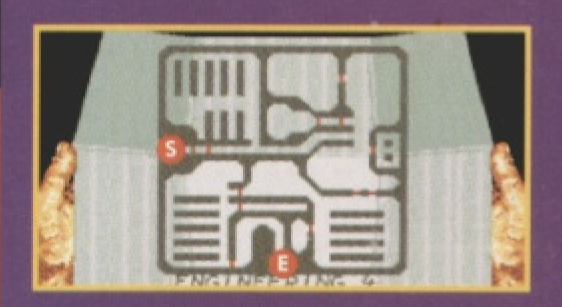
ENGINEERING 2 - Tr-d/vP!4

Not initially accessible. You have to grab the lift from Engineering 4 to mop up the aliens. Watch out for the corridors in the outer rooms.



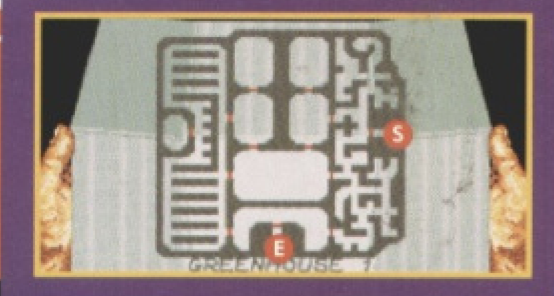
ENGINEERING 3 - DDY*-vOvW

Oh dear! The time of low ammo is nigh. Try to conserve supplies as much as possible. The aliens are on the increase, so a lot of running about to find weapons is often the case.



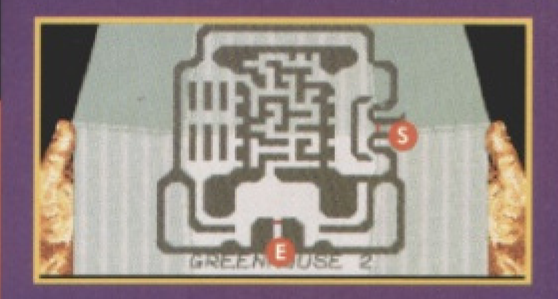
ENGINEERING 4 - Gra*CrO!V

At last a stockpile of guns! Waltz down the first corridor, and then hang a sharp left U-turn into one of many bonus rooms. Use the wall of flames trick again for the crabs.



GREENHOUSE 1 - WL8*CrO!V

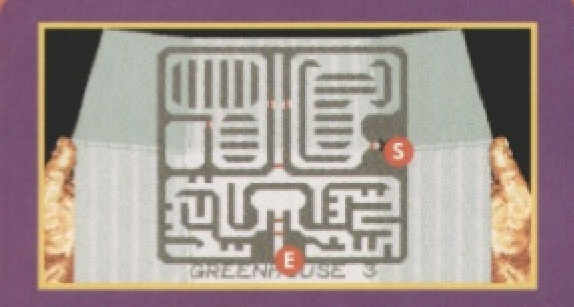
Things are starting to get foggy. What's more the maze-like construction of the level means a lot of doubling back and retracing of steps. Use the map all the time to prevent ambush.



GREENHOUSE 2 - ar8*vtKFs

Nab the shotguns in the alcoves straight off, but watch your back as snipers take pot shots. The night vision goggles are a lifesaver in the central maze section. The bottom left room is packed with pulse lasers, very handy.





GREENHOUSE 3 – LH)*-v)FX

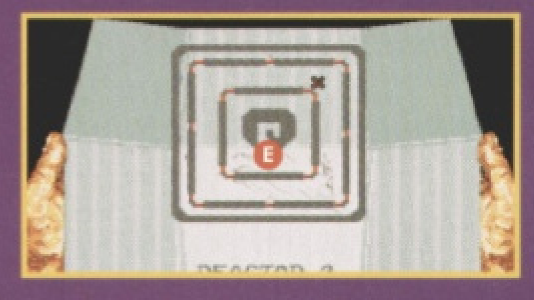
A whole new game begins in this the first of the 'search and destroy' missions. You must get hold of the bio-scanner to flush out the crabs. Caution is advised in the 'crab run' top right hand room. Keep searching previous locations for strays.

BRIDGE 2 – dFL*-vKqX

A long and narrow bug wasting session. Prepare to enter the reactors.

REACTOR 1 – OP3*-vOik

Absolutely crawling with crabs. The rooms flanking the entrance contain Medipaks, use them wisely. Head to the centre for the final battle on the Space Station.



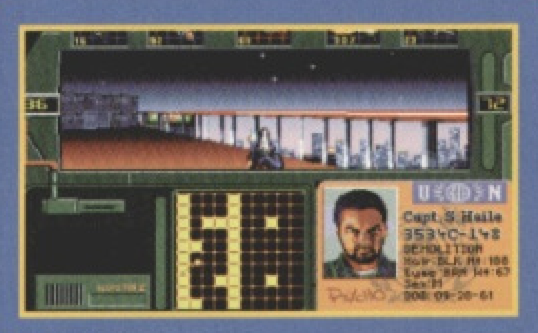
REACTOR 2 – OP3*-vOpV

The big boss! Try to pick him off through the doors, and don't allow yourself to be cornered. He takes tons of hits. Once completed it's on to the High Rise where the aliens have sought refuge.



HIGH RISE

A whole new breed of alien inhabit this abandoned building. They take more hits, are quicker, and more accurate. The levels are larger, so keep an eye on the alien death meter to ensure each level is secure.



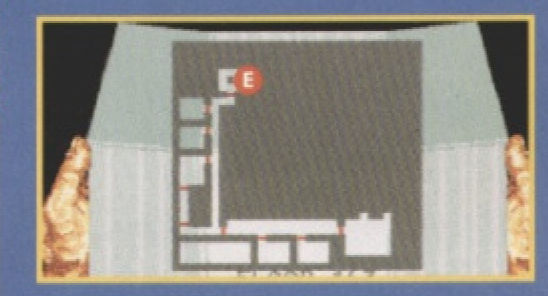
ROOFTOP

It's quite a view, but beneath you are floors packed with deadly foes. Try to shoot from a distance with the pulse laser as these guys are fast. The torch is useful when searching the enclosed rooms that are pitch black. I'm afraid it's a case of running the gauntlet up the right hand corridor. Persistence is the key.



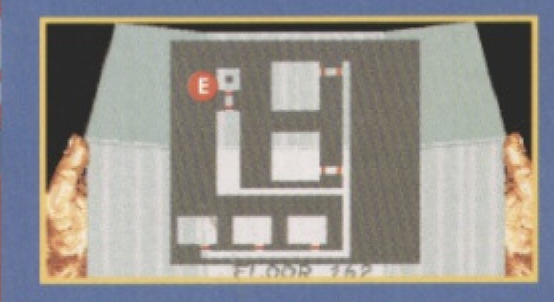
FLOOR 164 – ?nr5-vHnk

You will notice the stairwell connects most of the top floors, but remember you're on a mission and each floor must be secured. The rooms are filled with what appear to be soldiers, but who are in fact aliens, watch them morph. Yuk! Check the corners of the larger rooms for Medipaks.



FLOOR 163 – cnFXuvDvE

Grab the bullet-proof vest from the lower left hand room, and sit and wait for the aliens to reveal themselves from the corners. Take your time.



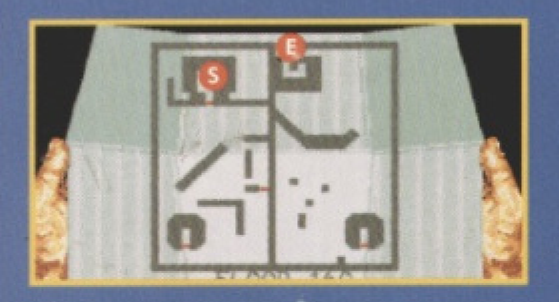
FLOOR 162 – jdhX-vDuk

An easy level and an opportunity to stock up on supplies that will be running low.



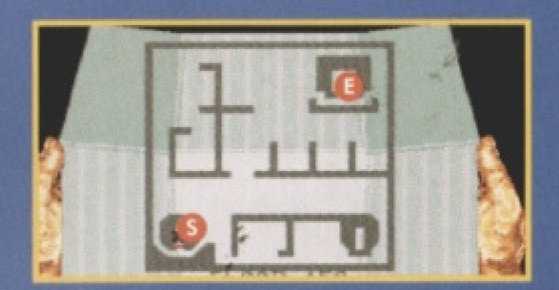
FLOOR 161 – YvhyCbxkc

Cough, cough! It's smoky down here, I wonder why? Fire! But a fire extinguisher is the least of your worries as it's time to meet the hell hounds. The hounds will sprint towards you and leap, you only have one chance to shoot them as they leap. A bio-scanner is at hand to ensure success.



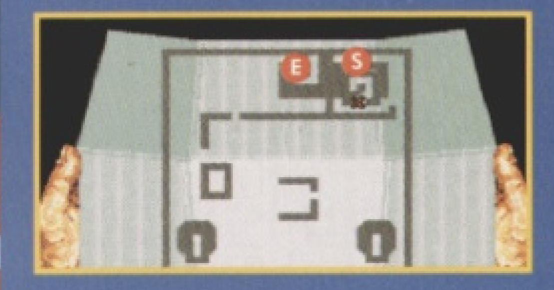
FLOOR 160 – TbxzutBsC

It's puzzle time. Clear the floor, but mind the alien troopers that pile out of the room to the right. Take the stairs to Floor 158.



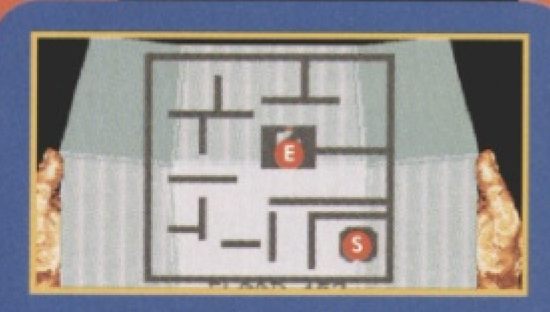
FLOOR 158 – cLxz-tBk2

More and more hell hounds to tackle. Head to the top right for the stairs to 159.



FLOOR 159 – WrBz-tBkV

The open-plan arrangement means there's little cover. The bottom left and right corners hold pulse lasers. Then it's round the back for the stairwell to the other half of Floor 160.



FLOOR 157 - Trx5-/Bhk
A steady pace is required to tackle the onslaught of the dogs. Use all available cover.

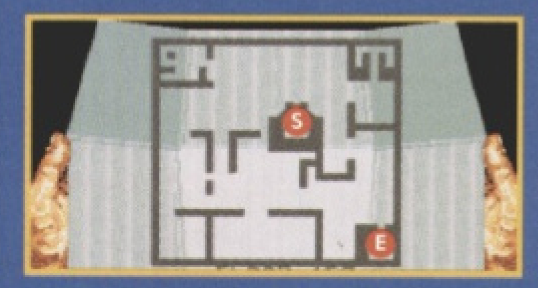


FLOOR 156 - ?DBzu9xgK
An easy level, but don't forget to pick up the flashlight on the way out.

FLOOR 155 - H8x5v8xFE
The biggest problem is the room in the top left as it is packed! Use of the automatic doors should help you to pick off offenders.

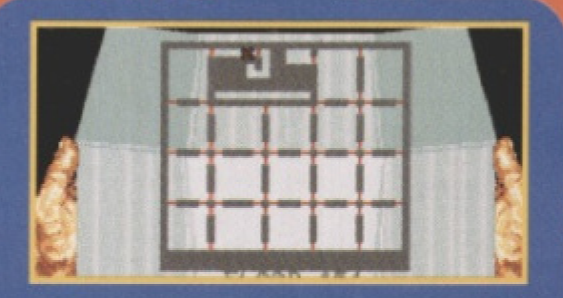


FLOOR 154 - MLDz88Brk
Again a case of seeking out all of the hounds. Not too much of a problem with the shotguns lying around.

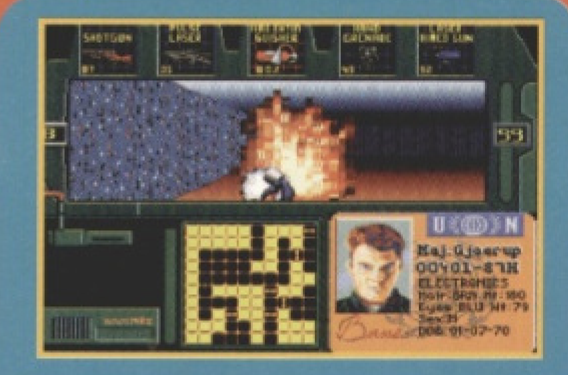


FLOOR 153 - ?rxz-8xgV
Ouch it's dark in here, time to locate those night vision goggles. Show the aliens you mean business with the rocket launcher hidden in the top right.

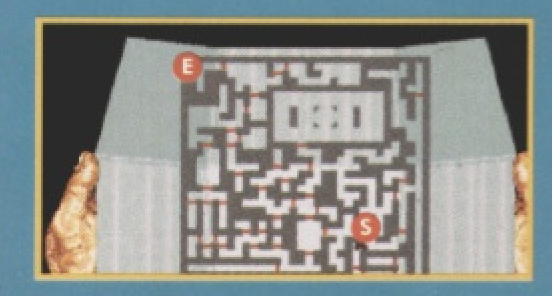
FLOOR 152 - bDg5-vxg7
The last opportunity to replenish ammo supplies before the confrontation with the alien boss. Be accurate, don't waste ammo.



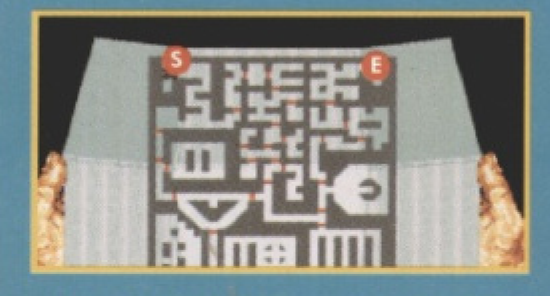
FLOOR 151 - ELgX6PDF9
The boss's lair. In a straight grid formation, make sure you're quick off the mark. Some ammo is located behind the entrance. Good luck!



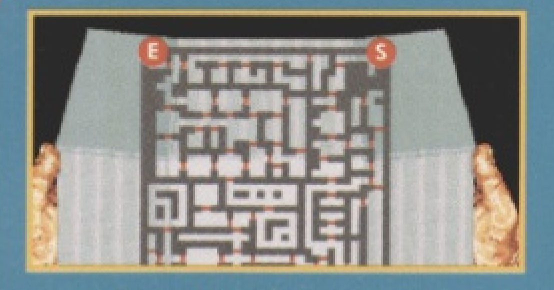
THE BASEMENT
Now you've gone and done it! In your attempt to flush the aliens from the High Rise, they've scarpered underground. Well, it's up to you to sort it out. Complications abound as you realise this is one heck of a maze.



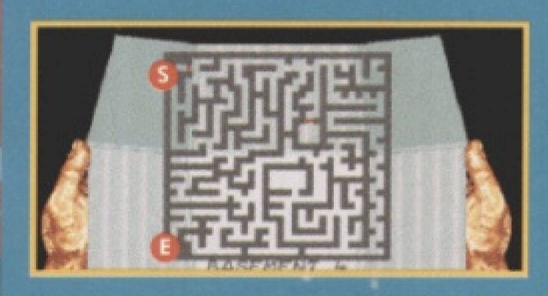
SUB BASEMENT 1 - ari/48xnj
The only help you have is the map, use it. Find the fire extinguisher before trying to tackle the fire, use it sparingly though. The long corridor on the right is empty. Exit to the top left.



SUB BASEMENT 2 - ?Lgdk8BOj
Those pesky aliens have lit decoy fires to confuse you. Check the fire on the map before snuffing it. Take a left at the large junction prior to even considering going for the exit.



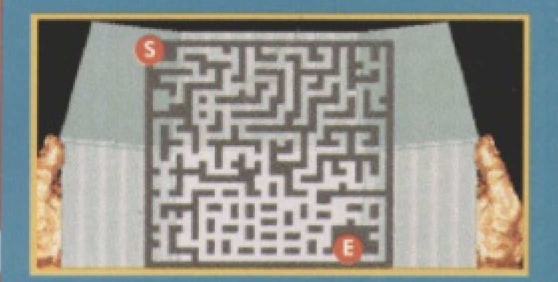
SUB BASEMENT 3 - OvibK9BEj
Another new breed of aliens live here. Identify their distinctive call, spin round and let them have it! The flamethrowers available mean only one thing, crabs!



SUB BASEMENT 4 - OHhd!ZxGB
The alien boss has been doing a spot of decorating down here with some attractive alien wall-paper. Oh, and he's removed all of the doors, so there's nowhere to hide. Supplies will be running very dry, but if you head for the box-room in the centre, you'll find the necessary.



SUB BASEMENT 5 -]8xb47Bv9
The mazes will be driving you mad, having to constantly double back on yourself. The exit is to the bottom left.



SUB BASEMENT 6 - LUDbF/BOQ
If at all possible try to keep tabs on the route you've taken. Also watch the enemy death counter so you can progress to the next level.

Tune in next month fot the final instalment of the adventure that will take you all the way to the biggest and baddest boss and back!

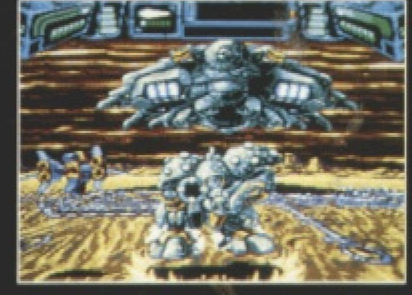
SOULSTAR

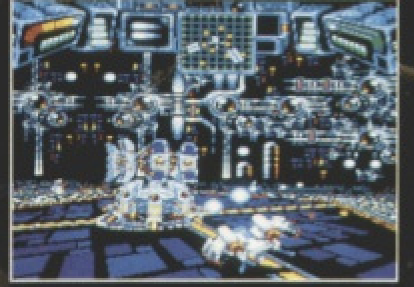
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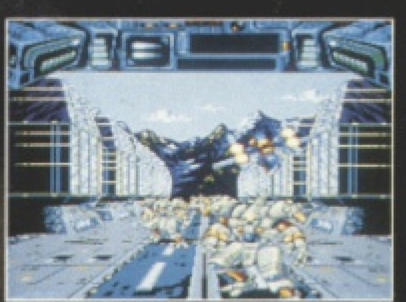
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"Soulstar certainly looks like a contender for Mega-CD game of the year."
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RED ZO

SITUATION RED

We follow up our review of Zyrinx's exquisite blaster-puzzler Red Zone with a blow-by-blow account of all missions. Standing out as one of the most varied, rewarding and sheer bloody rock hard warfare games on the Megadrive, we hope this Red Zone briefing is both enlightening and entertaining. NB. The guide represents the easiest way to complete the game — avoiding all unnecessary engagement.

MISSION ONE

A straightforward rendezvous with the agent on the small island on the south-east of the map. Be a smart cookie and travel due east first to take out the nuclear reactor that supplies the base in mission two, thus saving you a return journey. Fly due south and destroy the radar in the compound before flying onto to collect the virus disk.

MISSION TWO

Fly due north from the island, and you shouldn't encounter much hardware. Land at the bunker and select Shades. His grenade skills come in useful with all the sandbags in there. Stand in the doorway of the second room and lob a grenade in to clear the mines (A). In the computer room, take the explosives at the bottom of the room, then access the leftmost terminal. Now make a hasty exit! You'll have to plant explosives (button A and B together) at the sealed doorway.



MISSION THREE

If you're continuing from two, you'll require refuelling. There's fuel due west of the bunker. It's quite well protected by tanks, but a quick circle with cannon and rockets should sort them — remember that just blowing the turrets off is a quick way to disarm tanks. Now fly northwest. If you still have all your stingers and over half your rockets, fly directly to the airfield — the least protected approach to the airfield is from the east. Take out the 'little men' missile carriers before you hit the planes, as they'll cause trouble.

Now position yourself at the foot of the parked aircraft (B), and fire a rocket between the two planes. The remaining planes should takeoff — fire rockets rapidly to get as many as you can. Then quickly switch to STINGERS. When the countdown appears, rotate the stinger sight to it and fire as quickly as possible (C). You should now have control of the air.

Head south along the runway, turning to the southwest at the end. Flying due south should bring you past a welcome refuel, and away from the heavy hard-







NE



ware lying to the southeast. Fly on to the coast, and then follow the coastline to the east. Ignore the first bunker, and come inland when your latitude is the same as the second bunker. Switch to HELLFIRES. You need to circle the bunker destroy the tanks and missile emplacements before you land (D). Use Hellfires as soon as they lock on. When you land, select Rocco.

The first passage has one guard and ammunition. Go down the second passage and pull the switch. Go back up and left (if



the guards on the platforms are a hindrance fire a rocket before you jump across the gaps). Go all the way down (beware falling tiles) and take the final passage. Fall through the floor, go right and jump up. After using the lift, go down to pull the switch. Before entering the train, walk right for extra health.

In the missile room, there is health in the bottom right alcove. A neat trick is to stand in front of the guard in the right hand side of the room, just off centre. He can't get you, but the machine-gunner in the alcove will kill him trying to shoot you. The terminal in the centre of the room activates the missiles. Once primed, walk along the right missile track and take the side passage. Walk round to the terminal and set the self-destruct. On the way back, stand on one of the track supports to let the missile pass you (E). Don't linger!



MISSION FOUR

Grab fuel by going west. You may take a pounding, so return to the bunker to get the repair. Now go back to the power station and head north. Switch to HELLFIRES. Before you enter the fenced flight-path to the docked submarine, you must eliminate the missile battery on the coast in front of it, and the three to the north of it, whose fire covers it (F). Approach them from the south east and fire immediately your sight locks on. DO NOT ENTER THE FLIGHT-PATH IF YOUR TAIL IS DAMAGED as you need total control. The submarine has no defences, so ignore it until the missile batteries behind it are neutralised with rockets. After the U-Boat goes up, exit by the track to the west, but beware the booby traps. Approach each overhead strut, but do not go underneath until it falls (G). Ignore the explosions around you, they cannot harm you. Head directly to base on exiting the escape route.

MISSION FIVE

A headache and no mistake! Fly north and slightly east, so you reach the target island at the gap in the fence. Change to STINGERS. Turn left and follow the circular path, eliminating helicopters as soon as the sight locks on (H). After number four, turn right, destroy the batteries and right again for one final chopper (use cannons). Now land. Select Rocco.

In the first corridor collect the explosives. Set them beside the fence enclosing the toxic waste — be quick as proximity to this stuff drains your energy (I). Get out before they detonate, as waste engulfs the room. Now proceed, torching all guards until you get to the ones behind sandbags. Return to the chopper. Tap the joypad, and the chopper will land again, allowing you to select Shades. Use his grenades on the two remaining guards, and plant explosives on the conveyor. Exit pronto!



Now there is little time. Follow the course of the explosions and carry on north to the missile site. The targets are not the radar (as the intelligence report confusingly asserts), but the missiles themselves (J). They will emerge for launch individually, and you literally have seconds to use multiple rockets to send them to oblivion. This may take several attempts.

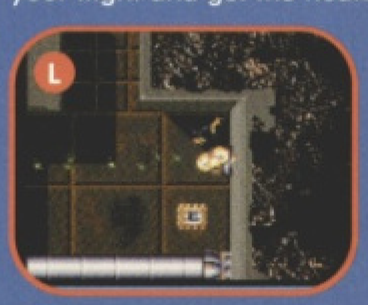




MISSION SIX



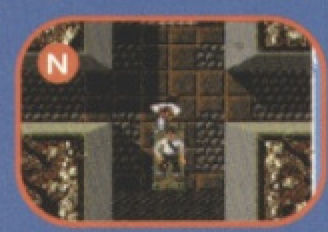
A relief after five. Replenish and head south to the contact. You will be asked to escort him overland. Follow the jeep directly from behind, HELLFIRES armed (K). Use your chopper as a shield from any enemy fire. There shouldn't be too much hassle before the jeep reaches the prison. You must disengage the nearby generator bunker to let enter, but before that, retrace your flight and get the nearby ammunition.



Select Mirage for the generator mission. Jump the first gap, and use a knife on the guard. Jump the second gap and pull the lever. Return to the central platform and go down. Shoot one of the contacts until the barrier is broken (L). Leave explosive next to the metallic tube.



Now go up and cross the mesh bridge, doing the same in chambers to the right and left. A pathway to the final generator (M) is now open. Plant explosives and leave. The prison gates should now be opened. Select Rocco for the mission. You should consult all prisoners, kill all guards and pull all switches before unlocking the President's chains. Push his bed towards the exit. One bridge is missing (N)— pull the lever in the bottom right hand cell to restore it. Well done.

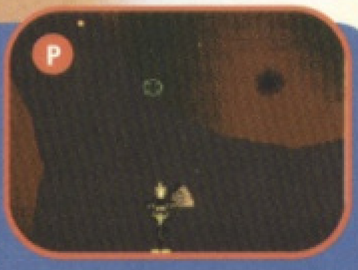


MISSION SEVEN



Pressure. The jeep heads northwards, relying on you for cover. Use rockets first, and then hellfires as the fire thickens. Do not be tempted to abandon the jeep to finish off one attacker, it can outrun the tanks, just keep up. After the party move to the boat (O), the procedure is reversed — use hellfires first, then rockets and cannon as boats attack from all sides. Bear in mind they are trying to ram your craft — one collision is enough.

MISSION EIGHT



From your landing position, fly east following the track of the road for minimal disturbance. Turn left at the junction and take out the tanks on the right hand side of the road and to the right of the bunker (P). Now you can land safely. select Rocco. Use a rocket between the sandbags on the first guard in the corner and pull the lever. The rest is easy, though do stop to play the Asteroids machine! (Q). When you enter the final room, torch the first guard from the doorway, and make your way to the left-most terminal on the long desk (R). Enter 'IVAN' as ID, and 'DEATH' as code.





MISSION NINE

Fly straight down the drive to encounter the convoy, select STINGERS. It's essential to remove the choppers first (S). Then destroy the tank escort with CANNON — rockets run the risk of destroying the target vehicles. To make life easier, do not shoot the two unarmed jeeps — the convoy will continue to move but pose no threat until you shoot them, so let it get closer to the Supergun before you eliminate them (T).

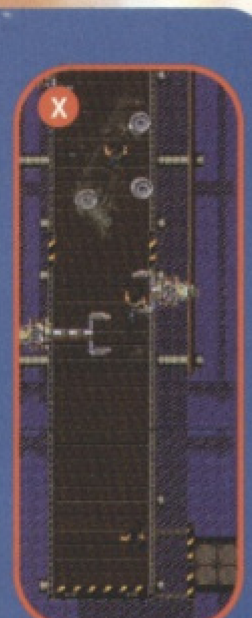
You will need to refuel now, so go to the one halfway down the map, just east of the road. It's lightly defended and has the bonus of a nearby field of radar to total (U). Now lift the shells from the trucks (Down and C together) and carry them over the loading tube beside the supergun and release (V).





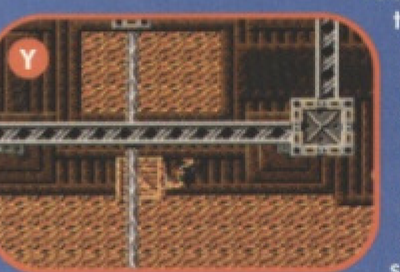
Once all are loaded, land and operate the gun. You actually only need one hit — the important target is Ivan's base to the West (W).

MISSION TEN

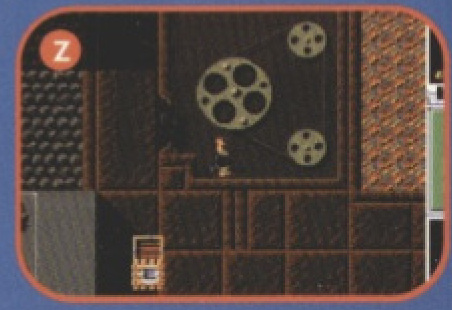


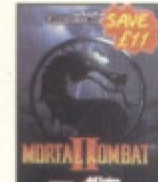
Fly to the base. Select Shades. The first part of the base has two parallel conveyors to negotiate (X). It is treacherous, frustrating and relies only partly on skill. Be patient. Remember these principles: Run sideways to avoid barrels; only jump in a clear vertical area; only try to pass a claw when you have a free area; don't try to pass the claws when they are level. One method is to wait until both claws have come to the end of their tracks and are moving away from you. Follow them up the conveyor slowly, waiting for a decent gap to skip past.

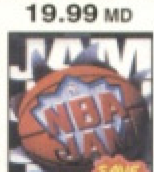
Once past, operate the switch in the next room, jump towards the crate and hold C. You are hoisted across the lava pit (Y). To get back on the crate, always jump towards it from the right, never from top or bottom. When you get to the second conveyor, pull the switch, take the underground passage and repeat the procedure.



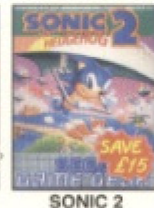
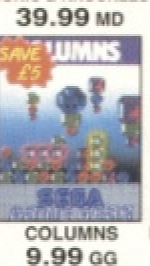
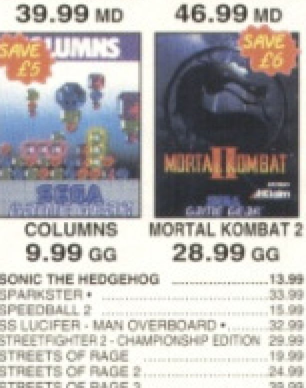
On the second platform a bridge has appeared. Operate the lava drain in the next room (Z). Go back and cross the floor to reach the locked door in the bottom centre of the chamber. Plant explosives, dispose of the ante-chamber guards, then face Ivan in a tricky climax of reflexes. Good work, soldier.







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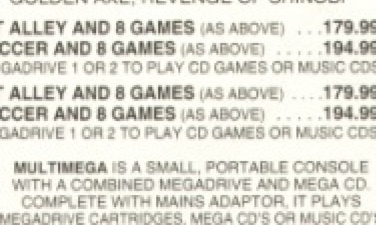
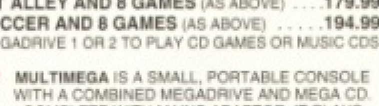
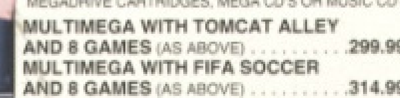
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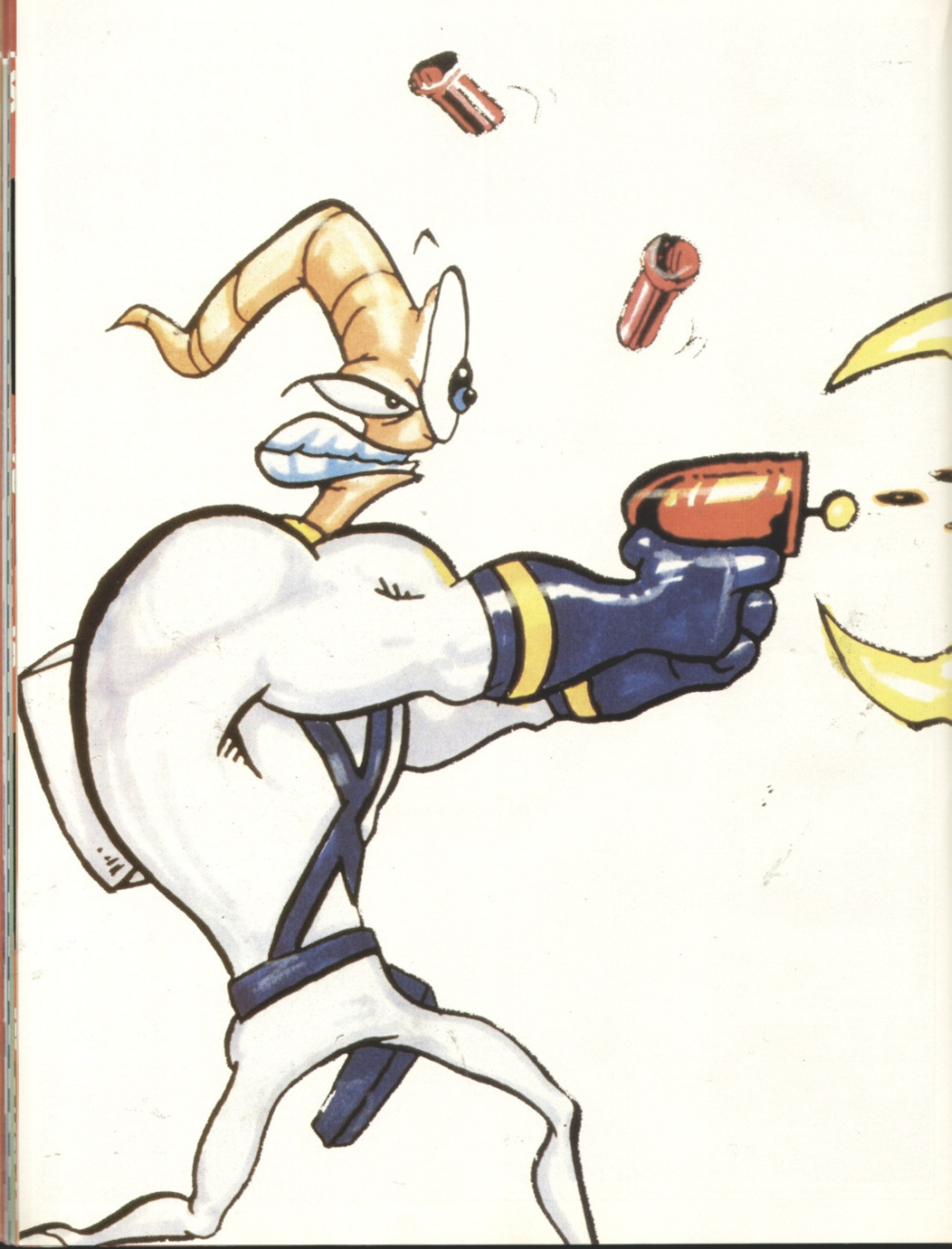
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GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

PRICE TBA

BY VIRGIN

RELEASE NOVEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: EARNED IN GAME
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD

1ST DAY SCORE
SOLVE MONKEY PUZZLE

ORIGIN
Elements from past platform games embellished with superb Disney artwork.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Traverse the platform levels, doing battle with the evil hordes of Scar and defeating end-of-level bosses.



THE LION KING

Here comes this winter's top Disney cartoon offering - The Lion King. Just like Aladdin before it, the film has done huge business in America, is going to do incredibly well in the UK — and has been translated over to the Megadrive in the form of a platform game.

You adopt the mantle of Simba the lion cub, whose parents are killed by the jealous, power-crazed feline known as Scar. It's your task to patrol the eight-way-scrolling platform levels eating bugs, battling the local wildlife and generally trying to reach a certain point of the game map that takes you on to the next, more difficult stage. Punctuating the gameplay are two bonus sections based on the knockabout antics of Simba's friends: Timon and Pumba. The Bug Toss stage sees Timon dropping bugs and Pumba eating 'em up. The second stage is a scrolling level with Timon eating nice bugs and avoiding the nasty flies and beetles.

But that's not all there is to this game. No sir. Read on...





YOUNG SIMBA

You start the game in guise of young Simba, a playful cub who does battle with the evil denizens of his kingdom. He's mastered the mystical art of the Super Mario foot stomp, which works on just about everything. Apart from porcupines. To deal with those bothersome mammals, Simba overturns them by either rolling or roaring at them. One foot stomp later and they're history.



▲ *At the beginning, your bark is little worse than your bite.*



E KING





RETURN OF THE LION KING

The last four levels cast you as the adult version of Simba, who possesses a wealth of combat techniques, ranging from two different paw slashes, a standing defensive slash - and best of all, a superbly animated throw that dispatches hyenas and jaguars in one fell swoop.



STAMPEDE!

The fourth level of The Lion King is a graphically stunning 3D stampede section. Basically, the evil Scar has trapped Simba in a canyon and scared the life out of some nearby bison. In the ensuing stampede, it's up to you to guide Simba between the rampaging oxen whilst leaping heroically over the rather inconveniently placed boulders you usually find in canyons. Anyway, it's great — definitely the high point of the game for sheer graphical brilliance.



LOGIC PUZZLES TOO!

The second level of The Lion King proves to be quite difficult. Simba finds himself being tossed around the jungle trees by a bunch of mathematically-minded monkeys. Yes, it's logic puzzle time! You need to get to the end of the level by roaring at specific monkeys in order to make them throw you in differing directions. It's really quite difficult actually, unless you're Commander Data out of Star Trek. Still, it adds to the challenge factor, which can't be bad.



▲ *Set to take an infamous place in game lore: The Lion King Puzzle!*

COMMENT



GUS

Not for the first time Virgin find themselves in the Disney Jungle. Lion King is a much more satisfying exploration of the platform genre than Jungle Book was, for a whole host of reasons. Firstly, it's much more challenging, even the early levels providing sticky points that require perseverance, cause a knot in your stomach, and a feeling of great relief when you conquer them. Secondly, the game has a fair amount of variety and innovation — the showpiece Stampede level being not only visually impressive but quite playable, and the bug-catching sub-games break up the main levels nicely. I need hardly bring attention to the quality of the graphics: they are uniformly superb, and the sampled dialogue is crystal clear. Lion King has the presentation, but this time it also has teeth.





JUMPING THEM WHEN THEY'RE TIRED

Bigger opponents in the game — hyenas and jaguars, for example — require special treatment. Young Simba has to tire them out (so they stop for a moment and pant a bit) before leaping on their heads. Adult Simba uses this opportunity to throw them off the screen, but can use his prodigious paw slashing abilities to sort them out in one-on-one combat.



COMMENT



STEVE

Having criticised The Jungle Book for being too easy and limited, it's nice to see that with The Lion king, Virgin have toughened it up a little and added a host of stunning sub-games. Lion King is a traditional Virgin platformer, but adds to the basic gameplay and adheres even closer to the plot with new additions to the traditional platform basis. The stampede level, for example, is nothing short of stunning, with the bison legging it towards Simba in fluid 3D, and adding a frenetic pace to the proceedings. Similarly, the platform stages hearken back to Aladdin, with Simba clawing his way up ledges, bouncing on some nasties or roaring or clawing others. The animation is top-notch throughout, with the hyenas deserving special praise, and the extended number of moves when the player matures into the fully-grown Simba cspawn a slightly different game. Younger players may struggle to solve the second stage's monkey puzzle, but perseverance brings its own rewards and it ensures the game will be no walk-over. The Lion King is by far a superior game to The Jungle Book and Disney fans will love its graphical elegance whilst games players will be entertained by its learning curve. By no means a classic, but entertaining and worth a look nevertheless.

GRAPHICS 93

▲Stunning. Varied in colour and backdrops, with scenes instantly recognisable from the film. Extra variety courtesy of the sub-games, too.

SOUND 90

▲Digitised speech taken from the film, and Megadrive recreations of its many tunes. Elton John for your Megadrive? Yup.

PLAYABILITY 86

▲ Familiar stuff so easy to pick up. Simba is one of the most controllable sprites to date, with extra controls added on his path to adulthood.

LASTABILITY 87

▲ From the elephant graveyard onwards, things start to get suitably tough.

VFM 87

▲ 24MEG is going to be costly, but there's a lot in here for your cash.

OVERALL 87

The most varied Disney licence to date. Flawed, but incredible to look at and more than playable.





WOL



Wolverine is the spirit of the hunter. The mysterious operative who came to the attention of Canadian military authorities had no history, no background and some incredible powers that made him more than human. The 'Weapon X' of Canada's secret project, Major Logan's abilities were further enhanced in by lifesaving surgery after a hunting accident, when an experimental Adamantium alloy skeleton was grafted onto his body, sometime in the Mid-1960s.

His built-in armoury has left him the proudest and most remote of the X-Men team. So, when he receives a warning from Professor Xavier and offers of help from his associates, he is loathe to accept. They fear he may be walking into a trap engineered by Shinobi Shaw, a deadly ninja enemy capable of morphing and penetrating solid objects. But Wolverine's animal spirit drives him into this confrontation alone.

BRAND X

Wolverine has starred for years in Marvel Comic's 'Uncanny X-Men' series, though originally he appeared in an adventure of the Incredible Hulk. His slow aging (linked to his mutant healing power) has seen him active across a large time scale. Currently his associates are Gambit, Storm and Cyclops.



THROWING SHAPES

Wolverine has been given a bundle of combat moves with which to confront the enemy, and better progress is made by stringing a wicked flurry of blows together. Depending on where you hit your target, different amounts of damage are inflicted. Sample the range of bone-breaking tactics:

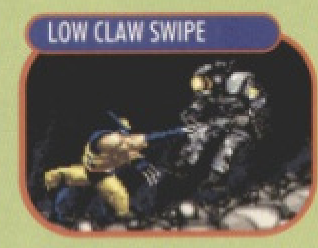
JUMPING CLAW SWIPE



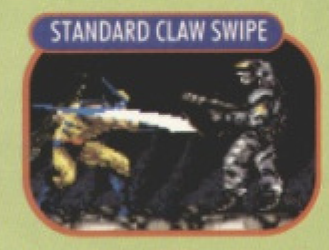
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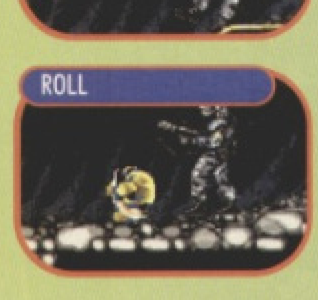
LOW CLAW SWIPE



STANDARD CLAW SWIPE



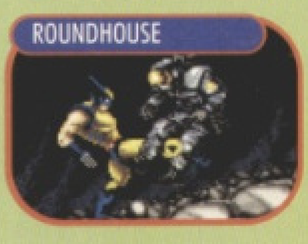
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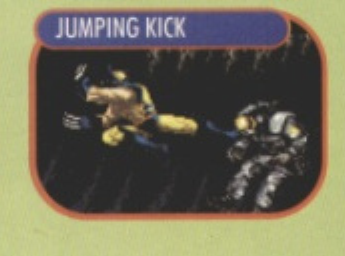
LOW KICK



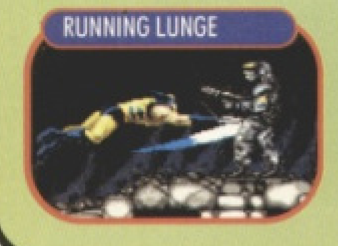
ROUNDHOUSE



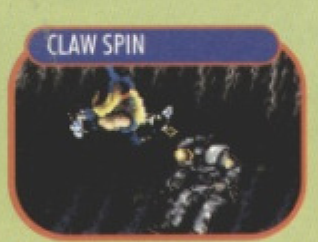
JUMPING KICK



RUNNING LUNGE



CLAW SPIN



DOWNWARD CLAW ATTACK



SPINNING CLAW SWIPE



VERINE



APPLY SOME SAVVY

Wolverine's extraordinary healing ability allows him to recover energy rapidly. His percentage bar allows him to take a fair licking before expiring, and if that wasn't enough, there are first aid kits carelessly lying around every level.

▲ *Curses, who left those Red Cross relief supplies in his grasp!*

PACK HUNTING

Eleven of Wolverine's least-favourite associates appear throughout the game in a bid to serve the wolfman as spare ribs. Files on each foe, with stats and biographical background may be accessed from the options screen.



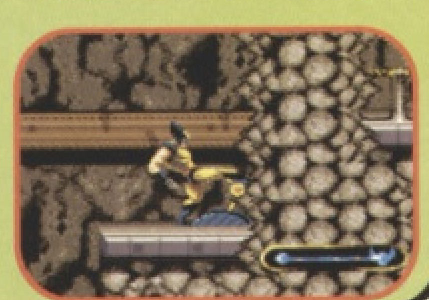
BABY DOLL

Wolverine is doggedly pursued by Elsie-Dee (LCD), a nasty little cyborg formed as a little girl. If she catches Wolverine on a level, she'll detonate in his arms (effectively putting a time limit on proceedings). Monitor her progress in the bottom right of the screen.



SUPER LEVER BROS.

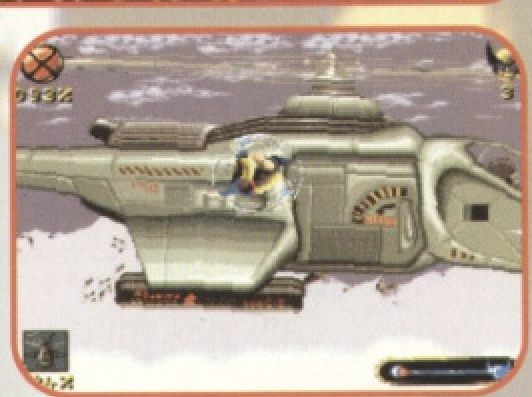
Escaping the first labyrinthine level of the lab involves some nifty lever and lift-work. A series of hoists must be triggered to reach out of the way exits. Some doors are electrically charged and should be approached with caution.





SNOW JOKE

Part of his frosty reception in the icy wastes, Wolverine faces attack from the air in helicopter form. Disabling the machine in parts brings it crashing to the ground.



DIG IN

The grip afforded by his claws allows Wolverine to climb sheer rock faces and tree bark, by swiping at them in mid-air. Also, a double spin allows him to travel higher and farther than a normal jump.

▲ *Wolfy joins the Swiss Family Robinson. Let's make a log table!*

COMMENT



GUS

Acclaim have done well to recreate Wolverine's character just as he is in comic form — a savage piece of goods. There's a commendable range of bloodthirsty slashes available, and no shortage of victims to feel the force of them. The first level in particular is a cracker. However, some areas of the game are patchy in comparison. Graphically there's a lot to commend in both backdrops and animation, though the enemy characters don't come across as distinctly as the excellent Wolverine sprite. Wolverine's real success is gelling platform and beat 'em up, and putting a fair amount of pressure on the player into the bargain. A better Marvel translation than the likes of US Gold's Hulk.

COMMENT



STEVE

Too often Marvel's heroes become ensnared in crap video games. Thus, Acclaim's Wolverine is a breath of fresh air after such dire releases as Maximum Carnage and Superman. The Wolverine sprite is extremely close to his comic book cousin , and features all the moves the lupine hero uses. Although the action is set within the expected platform-laden domain, it cleverly mixes the puzzle and beat 'em up genres to create a game both deeper and more playable than its rivals. Acclaim have really come up with the goods with Wolverine, and Marvel fans should team up with the claw-swiping hero as soon as they can.

GRAPHICS 88

▲Brilliant Wolverine sprite, crisp backgrounds and stylish story-board inserts.
▼Some of the enemies look poxy, and a few of the boss characters are indistinct.

SOUND 82

▲Ominous, moody music, which can set the pace on some levels.
▼Weak beat 'em up FX generally. Some weak music in places.

PLAYABILITY 89

▲Plays in quite a mean fashion. The range of moves lets you freestyle your way across the levels.
▼Certain levels play better than others.

LASTABILITY 86

Highly enjoyable to play, and sometimes a vicious onslaught to endure.
▼The password system relieves you of most of the pressure of completing the game.

VFM 86

▲Compares well to the previous X-Men games, and has a character all of its own.

OVERALL 89

Almost as sharp and tough as an Adamantium claw, Wolverine is worthy of any lycanthrope, or comic fan's time and money.



POWER GRIP

RECHARGEABLE BATTERY PACK
COMPLETE WITH MAINS ADAPTOR FOR GAMEGEAR





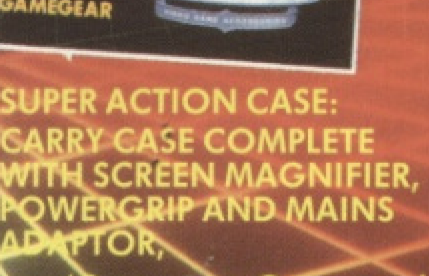
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2.5 X MAGNIFICATION FOR GAMEGEAR



- AGRANDISSEUR D'ÉCRAN
- GROSSISSEMENT DE 2,5 POUR GAMEGEAR
- BILDSCHIRMVERGRÖßERUNGSGLAS
- 2,5-FACHE VERGRÖßERUNG FÜR GAMEGEAR



SUPER ACTION CASE:
CARRY CASE COMPLETE WITH SCREEN MAGNIFIER, POWERGRIP AND MAINS ADAPTOR.
(Gamegear, Games and Batteries not included).



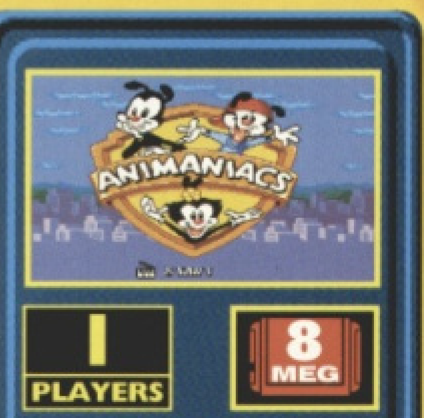
MEGA DRIVE CARRY CASE:
(Console and Games not included).

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1 PLAYERS

8 MEG

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

PRICE £39.95

BY KONAMI

RELEASE NOVEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS:3
RESPONSIVENESS: COO-EL
GAME DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE

1ST DAY SCORE
Reach the Sky Way.

ORIGIN
Platform/puzzler based on Saturday morning cartoons.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Collect five props with which to open a shop, believe it or not...

It's Saturday morning. Since 7:30 Joe 90 has had his brain implanted with the ability to gut fish and consequently saved the world, and assorted crap Disney programmes are on. If you are up this early, it is also apparent that you have either wet the bed or are kind of watching it whilst dozing...

Come 10:30, though, Pat Sharp, that bird off Blue Peter and would-be Philip Schofield, Andy Crane, introduce the highlight of the morning (until 'The Littlest Hobo' that is): Animaniacs. An umbrella title for the cartoon's many stars, Animaniacs is set within the Warner Bros film lot where the main heroes —a troublesome trio known as the Warner Bros (and Warner Sister) — constantly evade capture whilst tinkering with history, films or... well, anything that can be wrangled into the plot, really. Each episode features a number of co-stars, all of whom make similar cameo appearances in Konami's new platform fest...

ANIMAN

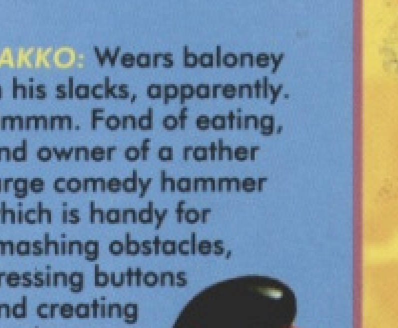
WE'RE THE WARNER BROTHERS (AND THE WARNER SISTER DOT)

As in the cartoon, the Warner Bros (and Warner Sister) are inseparable, and Konami's coders have ensured the game follows suit. The five movie sets are made up of scrolling platform-laden stages, each of which contain a series of hazards and puzzles. However, in order to bypass the various problems, the player uses the C button to switch between the three characters ready to put their special skills to use. And, in the time-honoured MEAN MACHINES way we're going to introduce you to the Warner Bros (and Warner Sister), and unveil their many skills.

WAKKO: The leader of the three, and a master of using two paddle-balls (a table tennis bat with an elasticated ball, ask yer Mums) at once - which is of absolutely no use at all. Good at pushing and pulling objects, though.

DOT: The Warner Sister. The soppiest female since Natalie off Eastenders. We all knew that girls can't climb trees or fight, but Dot's main weapon is a blown kiss which leaves her victim in a mushy state. Tsk

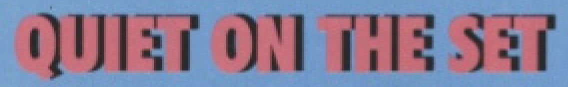
YAKKO: Wears baloney in his slacks, apparently. Hmmm. Fond of eating, and owner of a rather large comedy hammer which is handy for smashing obstacles, pressing buttons and creating sparks.







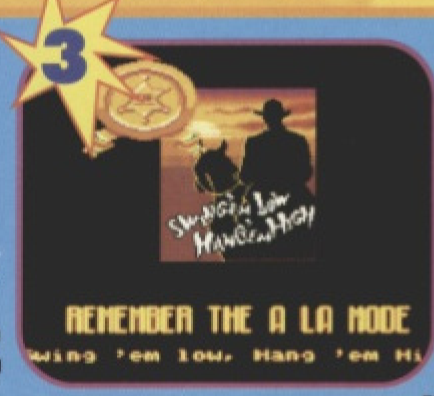




QUIET ON THE SET

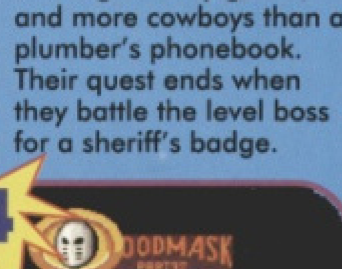


1. RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE. Riding the rapids, log jumping, and a walker robot. And that's without mentioning killer crocs, dozy pigeons and human cannonballs. All this for a felt hat...



3. REMEMBER THE A LA MODE Whilst can-can dancing Hippos rock the foundations, Wakko, YaKko and Dot are assailed by bouncing barrels, a lasoo-swirling security guard, and more cowboys than a plumber's phonebook. Their quest ends when they battle the level boss for a sheriff's badge.

2. SPACE TRUCKING based on YaKko's favourite sci-fi epic, our heroes ride rockets, avoid lasers and battle against all the usual men in rubber suits in search of a heroic droid's helmet.

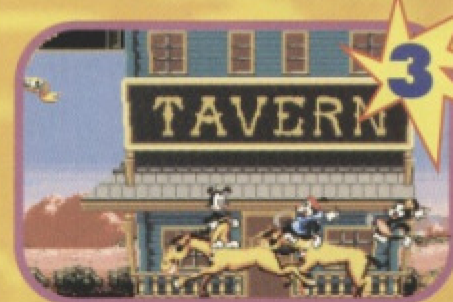




4. TO SCREAM OR NOT TO SCREAM Wakko's old Draughts partner, Death, introduces this level as the Warner kin search for a horror legend's hockey mask. Amidst the grisly ghouls, though, awaits a heart-warming reconciliation between a boy and his dog.









▲ *A boy and his dog, three gravestones, four bottles, one...*

▼ *It's the Warner studio lot, and rather a lot of it.*



WE'RE ZANY TO THE MAX

Most of the cartoon heroes from Animaniacs appear during the game at some point, so here's a guide for all you Yakko fans as to who's who and where you'll meet them.

SECURITY GUARD:
Appears every level using lasoos, riding crocs or whatever it takes to corner the Warner Bros (and Warner Sister).

SOLLY THE GOD PIGEON:
Without his Goodfeathers cronies Bobby, Pesto and Squit, but can often be found hogging moving platforms, meaning our heroes can't budge him. Not without a little feminine persuasion, anyway...

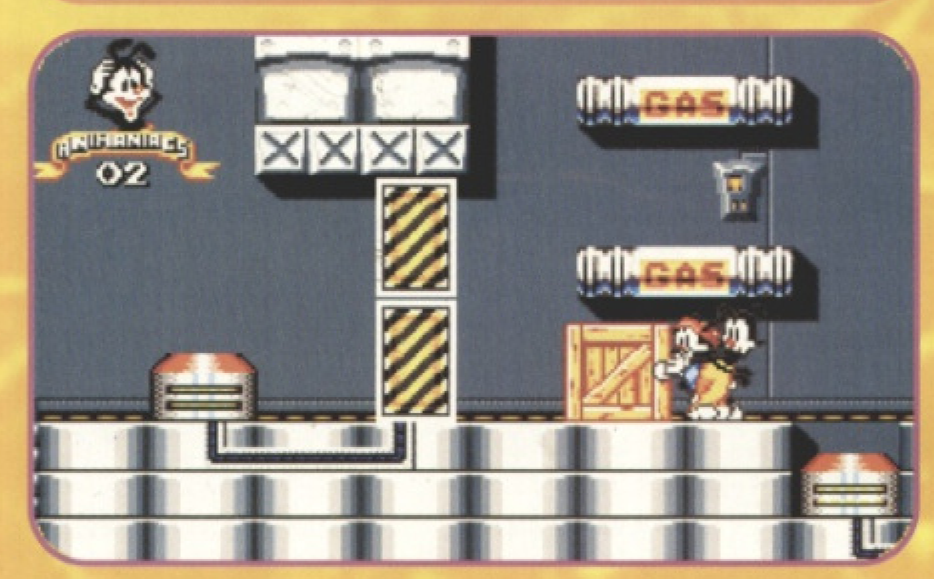
BUTTONS AND MINDY:
Buttons is a loyal hound, whilst Mindy is his young female companion. Throughout the game, the duo are constantly separated, leaving the player to reunite them. A lot.

PINKY AND THE BRAIN:
Two mice. One with the brain the size of a planet, the other completely dim. Both bent on world domination, and both found mooching around the game's first boss screen.

DOCTOR SCRATCH'N'SNIFF:
Mad scientist, and suitably reduced to a tiny cameo appearance.

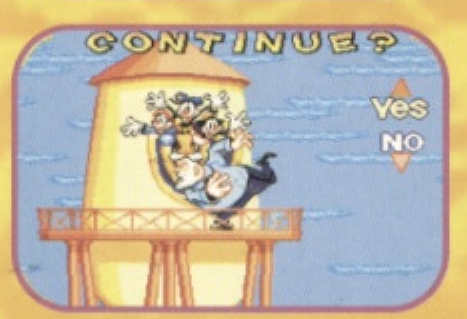
WARNER BROS BOSS:
Another minor cameo star — found looking tearful during the warm up level.

RITA AND RUNT:
Rita is a sultry cat whilst Runt is a love-struck pooch constantly shunned by his feline pal. Runt makes his first appearance in the warm-up level (blocking an exit naturally), whilst Rita appears much later.











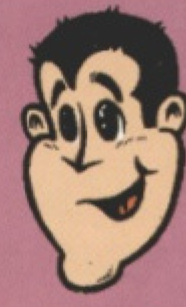
COMMENT



STEVE

Animaniacs is one of the best cartoon series I've seen, and Konami's game crams in more of the series' little in-jokes than I ever thought imaginable. Whilst it comes as no surprise that Konami have taken the platform route, the three characters and their individual talents adds a nice puzzle element to the proceedings, and proves extremely easy to effect. Graphically and aurally, Animaniacs is as near to the real thing as possible, but it is the playability that won me over. Animaniacs is extremely addictive with a good variety of hazards and obstacles, and a neat line in bosses — including a rather smart battle against the Security Guard as he chases Pinky and The Brain! It may seem impossible, but Konami have managed to create something original out of a tired genre, and platform fans out for a new fix should prepare to make like this game's heroes and get zany to the max.

COMMENT



GUS

I've seen Animaniacs a few times and I think it's rather clever — the Ab Fab of cartoon shows. But probably most of the tie-in jokes in the game have gone over my head. What's left is a very pretty platform puzzler, with plenty of graphic variety and no shortage of tough bits. I have to say it didn't hook me in the same way Konami's recent Probotector and Sparkster have, both are much more frenetic, but they have done the show justice.

GRAPHICS — 87
▲ Small but well animated sprites, and backdrops and characters straight out of the cartoon.

SOUND — 82
▲ The title tune is recreated in all its glory, and a series of catchy tunes and manic effects accompany the levels.

PLAYABILITY — 89
▲ Polished Konami fare — and as playable as we would expect. Switching between the three characters is simple enough, and the controls are min-

LASTABILITY — 82
▲ The levels are large, and get quite tricky later in the game.
▼ The puzzles aren't that hard, and a password system means you'll whizz through it fairly quickly.

VFM — 86
▲ A pretty much standard price for an above average platformer.

OVERALL — 87
Captures the manic feel of the cartoon perfectly, and is every bit as playable as past Konami platformers. One of the better licences we've seen.

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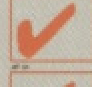
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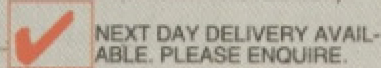
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1 PLAYERS

16 MEG

GAME TYPE
ADVENTURE

PRICE	TBA
BY	SEGA
RELEASE	JANUARY

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES:
BATTERY SAVE (4 PLACES)
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE
REACH BURN DAISY

ORIGIN
Soleil is in the mould of arcade/adventures rarely seen on the Megadrive, but resembling the Zelda series on Nintendo.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Defend the town of Soleil from the re-emergence of the creatures of darkness, with the aid of your animal friends and trusty sword.

Soleil

Go back. Back beyond the history books, back even beyond the hazy tales that bards put into ale-house songs. In the unrecorded times, at the dawning of the light and the creation of Soleil, the land belonged to other forces. Too hideous to properly conceive, good people know them only as 'monsters'. They were incomprehensibly evil and chaotic, and legion across the benighted earth. Then came the genesis of all things, and the first thing was the light. And evil evaporated in the light, so that good generations of folk like you would be born, and be happy in the world they named after light: Soleil.

But monsters were not completely destroyed. They found crevasses, nooks and cobwebbed crannies, in underground caverns, sombre forests and the fearful recesses of men's minds. Within the many shades of blackness came the glint of yellow eyes, looking for any sign of fading in the light. That fading has come, and you are the hero with the task of its restoration.



▲ *Nice beaver! Thanks, I had it stuffed...*

KITTY: I can save you when you are in a spot of trouble...but I can only do

ANEMONE BEACH





PETS MEAN PRIZES

Animal magic is an inherent part of Soleil. Soon you discover how to communicate with all other life-forms, although this inconveniently leaves you incomprehensible to humans. Many of these may be hired or persuaded to join you in your quest. The animals go to a little cell on your inventory screen. You may trail any two of your menagerie around behind you, using their powers — eg. the penguin makes your sword freeze things, the squirrel makes your sword rebound off walls. Some animals, like the cat, do not increase your powers, but have a single use.

EMPIRE OF THE SUN

Even the initial levels of Soleil are a diverse mixture of forest, beach, volcano and mountain. Levels are viewed from overhead and scroll over a large area of screens. Various exit points on the levels take you back to the large scale map, where interconnecting paths link locations. Each new location will have a focal point — a boss creature, an important object or someone to meet. Early on, you'll struggle with the three courses of the Rafflesia training school, which provides the three medallions needed to be a hero. The journeys to these places take you through realms of monsters, making you fight all the way.



▲ *Dear Tails, Getting loads of sun, but the food's terrible. Wish you were here, luv Sonic.*

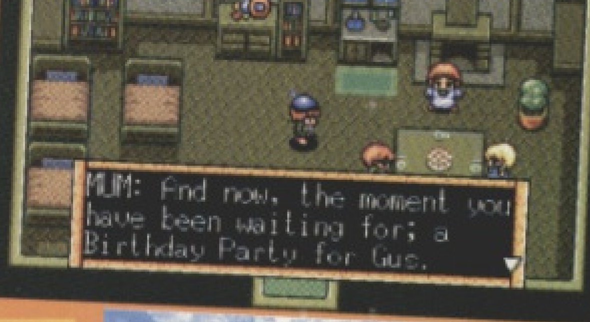


Soleil

RUN TO THE SUN

You start your quest in Soleil town, in the modest confines of your home. Having just reached the age of manhood (nobody reveals how this is decided), you are presented with your father's battle sword. The sword is your basic defence against enemies, but also lets you collect Malins, a currency that may be traded for lessons (eg. how to lift rocks), info or items. Backtracking lets you use new powers in previously explored areas.





▲ *Well this is some party. Where's the strippogram?*

Burn Daisy
Iris
Rafflesia School
Camellia Desert
Valley
Soleil Town

HOT DAISY

IRIS



SOLEIL TOWN



RAFFLESIA TRAINING



COMMENT

GUS

There never has been a Zelda-style game for the Megadrive unless you count the isometric gem, Landstalker. Soleil is even closer to the ideal than that, and I've loved just about every minute of it. It's a massive, absorbing game with some wonderful graphics and animation. So much thought has gone into the creation of Soleil, you get a great satisfaction working out the teasers set for you. The plot takes a while to get rolling, and for the first couple of hours, you may not think your playing anything special, but as you get into the characters and gameplay, you won't look back. But slackers should be warned of some obligatory head-scratching on the puzzles, and some equally tricky arcade sections. However, there are enough neat rewards along the way to keep any hero heartened. Made all the more desirable by its unique position on the Megadrive.

Soleil

▲ You know someone with black hair...

▲ This is worm country, boy.



COMMENT



For me, Zelda was (and still is) the pinnacle of programming on the SNES. The unique style of both RPG, action, puzzler, and adventure set over an epic of a storyline was something to really get your teeth stuck into. And it is only right that Megadrive owners should have their fair share of the fun. Even though Soleil bears more than a passing resemblance to Zelda, the game is by no means a clone. I was particularly impressed by the fluid movement of the main sprite, making both exploring and fighting simple and clean. But the training sessions, admittedly a smart idea to get the ball rolling, are a bit of a hindrance as they do tend to drag when all you want to do is get stuck into the monsters and puzzles. This aside, Soleil is an extremely unique product on the the Megadrive and an absolutely essential purchase for anyone even vaguely into the weird and mystical world of RPGs.

GRAPHICS 93

▲Fabulous use of colour, and the central character looks lovely. Amazing variety and attention to detail, like the footprints left in the sand.

SOUND 82

▲The music changes constantly to suit the location.
▼The sound effects are really not more than average.

PLAYABILITY 92

▲ A great mixture of adventuring and arcade gameplay, that has no peer on the format. A feeling of depth to the whole game.
▼Takes a while to grow on you.

LASTABILITY 91

▲ Soleil is a big game, and it's a certainty you'll play through to the end. Happily, it's not a walkover, either.

VFM 90

▲ This game is unlike anything else in your Megadrive collection, which is recommendation enough.

OVERALL 92

This year's lavish arcade adventure that frankly demands purchasing. Universal gameplay appeal and highly attractive presentation.

SOLAR PERPLEXUS

Soleil is a puzzle game on many different levels. There's the over all mystery of the revival of the monsters, and finding the right objects and animals. Also, within each location, lateral thinking needs to be applied. One area has a howling wind which threatens to sweep you into the water, but the same wind may be turned to your advantage. Blocks are moved to activate switches, and different types have varying properties. Some areas are constructed as mazes, and some bosses, like the Shuffler, require logic to vanquish.



▲ The first boss, and someone's watching from the fireplace.





▲ At this point you are Slimy, the boy monster. Ahem.

LIGHT FANTASTIC

There are diversions along the arduous way. One is the go-kart race against the cheetah, set in the village of Iris. Outrun the big cat, and his speed powers are added to your own.

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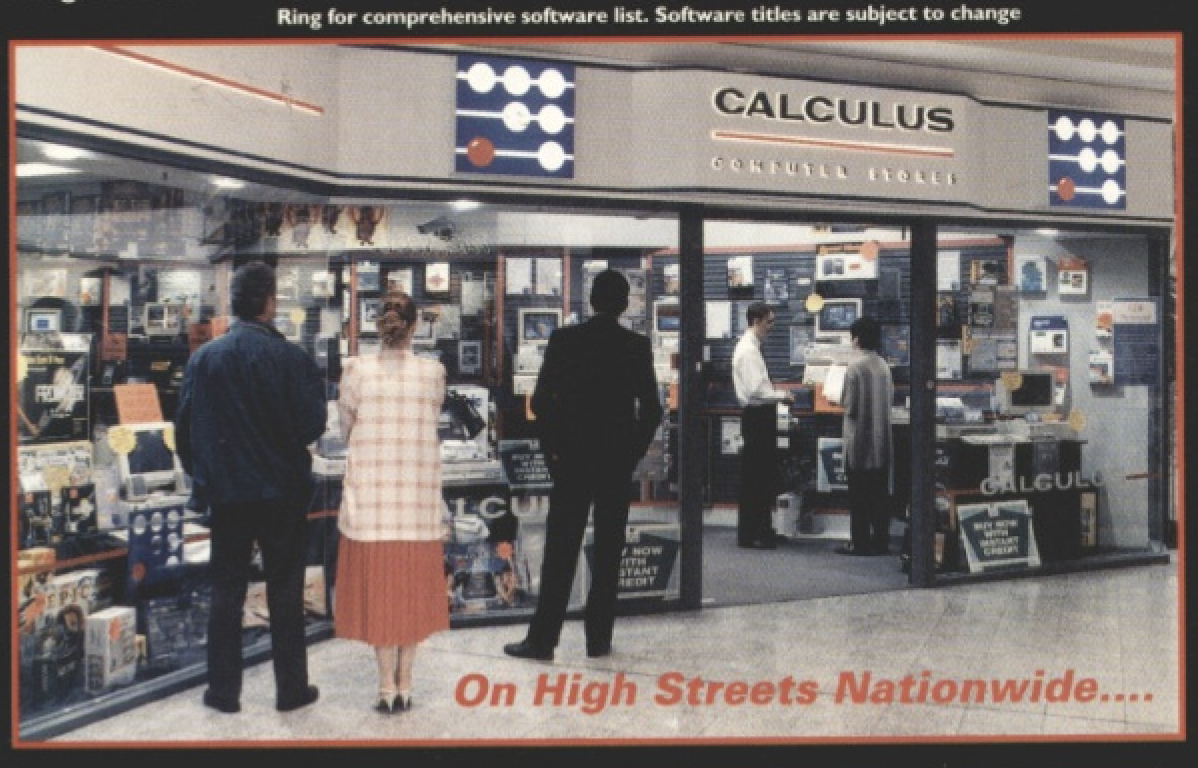


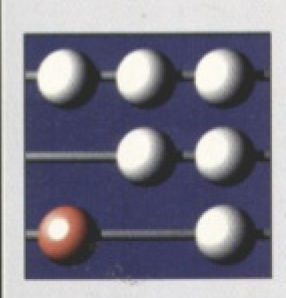
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1 PLAYERS

16 MEG

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

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BY SONY IMAGESOFT

RELEASE NOVEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 2
SKILL LEVELS: 2
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE
LONESOME GHOSTS

ORIGIN
Originally planned as a celebration of Mickey's 66th birthday, but delays brought about a reworking into the 'Timeless Tales' theme.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Take a trip to the future to rescue the oceans and dolphin kind from the threat of the resurgent Vortex.

MICK

Like the plot of one of those Hollywood flashback movies, Mickey Mouse confronts his past in Mickey Mania. However, although the plot and title suggests some painful psycho-drama couch trip, Sony's new star-vehicle platformer is an upbeat exploration of some of the best Disney animated shorts of Mickey Mouse (at least the ones where that nitrate celluloid hasn't deteriorated and caught fire).

Something almost as bad has happened. Pegleg Pete has infiltrated the old film stock and threatens the Mickey characters in each one. Ranging from the black and white pre-talkie shorts to the slick, computer-generated opuses of today— new eyes, new ears (Mickey M has undergone more cosmetic surgery than his old pal Mickey J) the mouse must find and rescue each of his human goals.

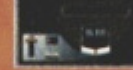
ARRESTING REAR

The tradition of Mickey platform games has enthroned the bum bounce as the main method of attack. Landing on enemies still has its uses in Mickey Mania, but marble-throwing has emerged as a vital weapon against Pete. However, there is a finite supply of these black projectiles.





▲ *"Okay, so I'm a soldier sprite in a Disney platform game, but w*



EY MANIA

EAT MY SHORTS

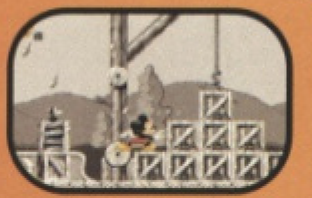
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STEAMBOAT WILLIE (1928)

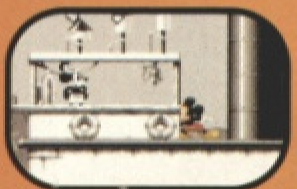


On the boat, you'll find Mickey without too much trouble, on the whistle-blowing bridge of Willie. Hitch a ride as the ship unloads.











The port's hazards number cannonballs and falling crates amongst others. There's also a back to back mini-puzzle with bells and belly. The level ends with a devious bomb-crane mechanism.

THE MAD DOCTOR (1933)

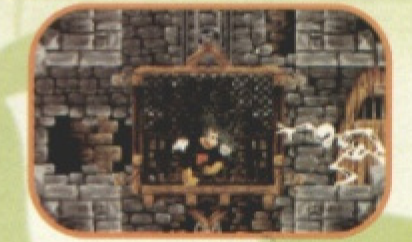




The Mad Doctor is not averse to the odd horror movie cliché — vampire bats and skeletons form the welcoming party of his intimidating abode. The opposite of a welcoming hearth has Mickey swinging with flames licking at his ankles.

The trolley race is a diversion, which doesn't have to be completed, and requires fast reflexes. The pace is maintained in the following downstairs dash on the revolving tower. This place needs a full structural survey!

Going up! The non-express elevator takes you all the way to the final laboratory confrontation. You do the experimenting.



▲ *Why is the floor wet?*



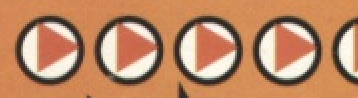
THE MOOSE HUNTERS (1936)

A two-parter initiated as a hunt for the camouflaged Mickey Moosehunter. Pluto acts as your hunting dog, pointing at any disturbance in the undergrowth. Then your Mickey finds more than he bargained for in a 3D pursuit by an enraged moose. The more obstacles you hit, the closer your heels come to those antlers.

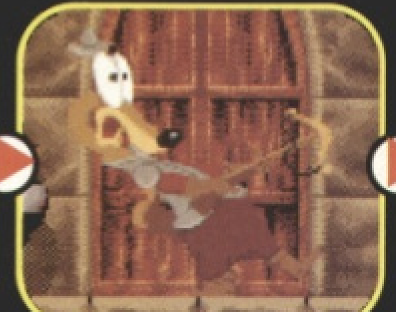










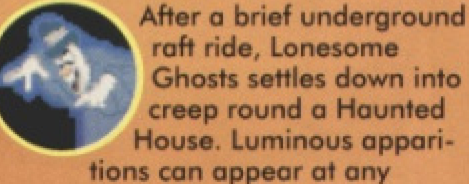






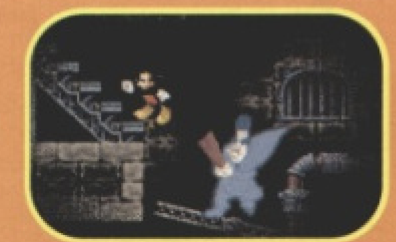


...at's my *motivation* ?"



LONESOME GHOSTS (1937)

After a brief underground raft ride, Lonesome Ghosts settles down into creep round a Haunted House. Luminous apparitions can appear at any moment, subtly armed with a large plank of wood (probably with an nail in the end). There are some cool pivoting platforms that require poise and balance to master.

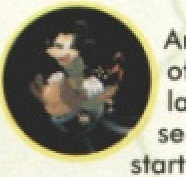


And the waters shall rise until they cover the Hall...The ghost with the outboard motor has you over a barrel — as does his creeping friends.





FUN AND FANCY FREE (1947)



Another of the larger sections, starting with a jaunt in a Giant's country garden. A little bit of headwork is required with regard to horticulture.





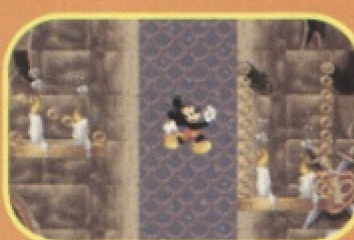


The arachnoid diversion involves a confrontation with a big hairy spider, and loads of little ones. The reward for victory is a free run of the tea table. Jam butties and lashings of ginger beer.

PRINCE AND THE PAUPER (1990)



In days when knights were young and dandy...Mickey dons a doublet and enters Pete's final lair. There's a nifty Errol Flynn chandelier-skipping section for starters...



▲ *Mickey has a case of the Errol Flynn's. Or is it Errol has a case of the Micjey Finns?*



This level is crawling with guards. Guards in the library, guards in the kitchen. Once you've sidestepped the cross bows, Mickey faces a rising water level and a rubber ring.



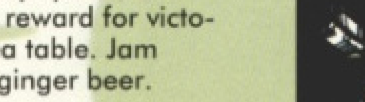
And hence to the final carry-on confrontation with the obese Pete. As the snow falls picturesquely outside the window, mortal cartoon combat goes on in the Great Hall.

COMMENT



PAUL

There's no doubt Mickey is a feast of outstanding graphics and animation. But I was slightly concerned by the size of the levels, many of which zip past a bit too quickly in their visual glory. Undeniably a glorious homage to the world's most famous cartoon star, but one that will be far more relevant to his younger fans.



COMMENT



GUS

This isn't the only game with fantastic visuals I've seen this month, and if it were not for the ingenious sub-sections and challenge of Mickey Mania, it could have been sidelined into the 'dumb blonde' category of pretty and vacuous platform games. As it is, Travellers Tales have produced something slick and commercial and destined to uphold the 'quality' aspect of Disney licenses, whilst offering areas of real gameplay enjoyment. The graphics are, of course, uniformly wonderful, especially the attention to detail and imitation of the source material. Linear in design, the gameplay is quite straightforward (with a nod to puzzle elements) but with some intense and clever sections that refuse to roll over and submit. The 3-D chase bit is nicely done, if too easy to beat, and the rotating tower and bonus level impress. This should hit the spot with younger players and the 'family entertainment' circuit, and so it should.

GRAPHICS

92

▲ Any complaints would be quite inappropriate, considering everything is as Disney as Tinkerbell wings. A round of applause.

SOUND

81

▲ The sound effects are wonderful, really creaky doors and spooky ghost noises.
▼ The music is apt but frequently dull.

PLAYABILITY

88

▲ The look of the game carries you through, and there's been an effort to provide surprises for you as you go.
▼ Gameplay that is too linear for some.

LASTABILITY

83

▲ Thankfully level three onwards gives you a run for your money.
▼ Some sections and puzzles last about the length of a fruit salad or mojo.

VFM

82

▲ State of the art Disney platform action.
▼ Bear in mind Sega's Mickey and Donald is now half the price...

OVERALL

87

Mickey Mania manages to span the market for kiddie Mickey fans and reasonably serious games players. 'Something for everyone', as they say.

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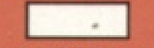
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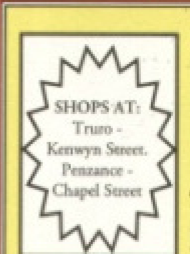
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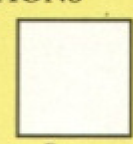
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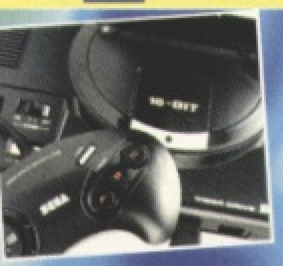
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BOOGERMAN

A PICK AND FLICK ADVENTURE™

According to the ad: "Your eyes take in more information than the most largest telescope; Your brain is quicker than the most powerful computer — You're amazing". Ah! true perhaps, but their are other facts they would like to sweep under the carpet (or, more aptly, wipe under the desk) — you produce enough gas to heat the whole of Huddersfield each year; you make enough meaty chunks to keep the proverbial 101 dalmations happy; there's enough wax comes out those ears to take the hair off the legs of the world's entire complement of supermodels — you're grotty.

These sad facts — that our bodies are festering pits brimming with gloopy residues and unnatural odours (well Rad's is anyway) are the basis of Boogerman,. who has turned them into a virtue, the superhero of scum, no less. His powers are now employed to stop the contamination of an alternate dimension, which is being corrupted by our human waste.

▶ *Boog's des-res in cardboard city.*



SQUAT THRUST

Bodily functions to the rescue! Boogerman's arse arsenal resembles those dirty little rhymes you used to sing along the lines of "In 1966, the Queen pulled down her nicks, she liked her bum etc..":



BELCH!
A deep-throated croak to stop the most fearless monster in his tracks.



FLICK!
Take a lump of snot between your fingers and flick.



RIFT!
Bend over a launch a mustard gas attack. Starts as a parp, but hold it to build up to a rumbler.



LOOGIE!
Hawk up a big greenie, mix it with milk and spit.



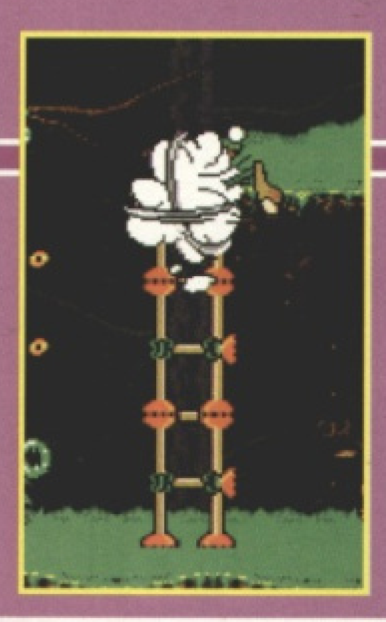
BANGER!
Mix a bottom burp with a chilli for that authentic 'real flame' effect.





S-BENDER TACTICS

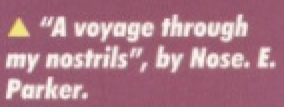
On rare occasions, Boogerman comes across a lav, which bears an up or down arrow symbol. By stepping onto the down seats, he enters a whole new set of sewer levels — the land that Domestos forgot. These are normally chunk-ful of plunger goodies and power-ups, and they also reset all the plungers when you re-emerge (on the up arrow lavs). Take care before you slip down the pan, though, as there may be something nasty lurking under the rim!



TAKE THE PLUNGE

There's a novel method to attaining extra lives. Collect as many plungers as possible, then assemble them into scaffolding at the end of the level. If the erection reaches the upper level, Booger gets his grubby fingernails on an extra life.





▲ *"A voyage through my nostrils", by Nose. E. Parker.*















COMMENT



GUS

Boogerman will be the answer to the prayers of the average Joe Viz reader (Foureyes is his surname, I believe), being the must utterly juvenile video game ever created. Actually, I'm quite juvenile, so although there were no belly laughs, I quite enjoyed being able to fart with impunity instead of clenching my cheeks as normally happens. What matters is the game behind the styling is quite sound — a chirpy and not-very-easy platform romp, which likes to keep you on your toes and provides a nice clutch of secret levels and bosses. My one concern is that things don't change that much into the game. The level graphics change, but the game's distinctive look doesn't make for a great deal of variety, and the layouts are quite linear. However, Boogerman is saved by excellent animation and FX samples, and a sense of humour which Lion King, Mickey Mania et al lack.

AM I SURROUNDED BY IMBECILES?

One amusing details is the frequent incompetence of your foes. Most have the IQ of a bogey (which is mostly what they are). Vampire bats frequently knock themselves out on tree trunks, and imps trip up when lunging at you with spears. The dolts!









▲ *Sort of making the two-backed monster, after a fashion.t*



BEG Y'PARDON

In common with the other new Interplay titles, special mention should be made of the excellent sound effects. Never have so many farting, burping and lav flushing effects been assembled to such effect. Boog himself, and his boss chums have their own characteristic utterances — the first foe being a country bumpkin with a pet chicken.

COMMENT



STEVE

Behind the novelty value of the Interplay hero's farts, burps and snot-related japery, there is still a remarkably playable platformer. All too often a novelty idea such as this will swamp a game, yet Boogerman's filty habits actually fit into he gameplay really well. Yes, it is another platformer, but it is extremely polished and incredibly playable. Farting at the assorted baddies or flicking bogies is extremely easy to pick up (but, hey, you all knew that!), and a constant stream of bad guys and bosses keeps the action ticking along. You're not going to find anything radically new in Boogerman but, like Ocean's Mr Nutz, what it sets out to do it does very well. Platforming at its most playable, and worth a go just for the revolting sound effects.

GRAPHICS — 86

▲ Great Boogerman animation, and crisp, quality background images. Amusing enemy sprites.
▼ Quite a limited set of colour pallettes, and styling ideas.

SOUND — 90

▲ Uniformly excellent — the FX samples make the game concept almost funny, and the music has a kitschy sort of feel that's just right.

PLAYABILITY — 89

▲ A nippy little platform game that's going to cause you a few gnawed fingers.
▼ Too many deaths from falling onto hidden enemies below.

LASTABILITY — 83

▲ The password mode has been sensibly implemented. Plenty of levels, and lives have to be earned.

VFM — 84

▲ 24MEG is heap big game to play about with.

OVERALL



88

Snot that funny, but it's a good little platformer. This is one bogey that's well above par.

MR NUTZ

1 PLAYERS	8 MEG

GAME TYPE: PLATFORM

PRICE	TBA
BY	OCEAN
RELEASE	NOVEMBER

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: COOL
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY/AVE

1ST DAY SCORE

REACH SECOND BOSS

ORIGIN

One of Ocean's Super NES platform heroes, Nutz marks the Mancunian giants' entry to the Sega market.

GAME BREAKDOWN

ORIGINALITY, REFLEXES, CHALLENGE, ACTION, STRATEGY

GAME AIM

Here we go gathering nuts in... erm, November. And bouncing on bad guys.

Great Squirrels of our time:

1. Squirrel Nutkin: A member of the infamous 'Captain Beaky's Band' who created havoc on the radio with the help of their ring leader, Keith Michelle. Now 'hiding' on the Costa Del Sol.

2. Tufty: In the late 70s/ early 80s you couldn't watch TV without Tufty and his mates telling you how to cross the road. Well if Squirrels are so bloody good at road safety why are there so many squashed on busy side streets?

3. Secret Squirrel: God awful cartoon which is only marginally better than Batfink. A mate of Touche Turtle.

4. 'Nice One Squirrel': A football chant urging the bushy-tailed creature 'let's have another one.' Loses a little in the translation.

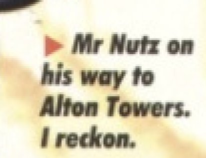
5. Mr Nutz: Unbelievably cute hero of Ocean's first Sega platformer who is out to collect as many nuts as possible so he can sod off and hibernate. Because of his nutty diet his turds resemble Topic bars. Incidentally, where do Topic bars come from?

▼ *I wonder if his first names are Keith and Peter? He'd be KP Nutz then. Boom boom.*



HERE WE GO GATHERING...

For a member of the race supposed to stock up with nuts for hibernating, Mr Nutz has a rather care free attitude to his squirrel stockpile. As he lopes along the scrolling play area, numerous woodland mutations stand in his way, ready to sap the bushy-tailed hero's limited energy supply. However, a quick press of the A button lets fly with one of his pecan arsenal, killing anything in its path. If, however, Nutz' nut supply runs out, he can resort to leaping on his foes (not recommended if they are adorned with large spikes, though), or crouch down and fell them with a swish of his massive tail.



Mr Nutz on his way to Alton Towers. I reckon.













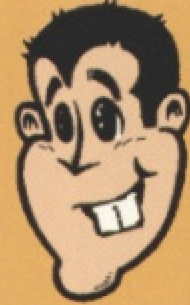
LEVEL-HEADED

The play area Nutz explores resembles something from a Grimm fairy tall, and is shown as a scrolling map at the start of every stage. All the customary level ideas have been incorporated, with spooky forests containing all manner of oddball woodland nightmares, a series of claustophobic caverns housing manic vegetation, and a gaudy-looking giant's house — complete with a huge tenant acting as a boss! Initially, the levels are simple horizontally-scrolling affairs, but from the dark forest onwards, they are expanded to scroll in all directions, with only one of several paths guiding the searching squirrel to the exit.



▲ The dangers of wasp surfing revealed in full. Don't try this at home. You'll kill 'em.

COMMENT



GUS

Ocean finally arrive on the Megadrive, and this should give you a taste of why they are one of the most successful British software houses. What these guys don't know about platform games isn't worth knowing. Fair enough, Mr Nutz comes across more of an experiment of what the machine can do, but it's a pretty slick piece of work, both in presentation and gameplay terms. The deceptive initial levels hide some perfectly pitched later stages and the control has a better feel than both Mickey and Animaniacs. However, there is cuteness overkill, and I don't think after Nutz that I could bear to look at another little woodland creature, unless enmeshed in the underside of a Pirelli radial. Pleased don't be deceived into thinking this is guaranteed boredom — you'll be pleasantly surprised.

COMMENT



STEVE

Mean Machines is suffering from a platform overdose this month, but, even so, I've become a bit of Mr Nutz fan. I remember playing it in its Super NES incarnation and feeling it was a little too slow at time, but this Megadrive version is considerably faster and the game opens up a great deal because of this. Graphically, Nutz is one of the best platformers of late and whilst it doesn't have the animation of, say, Lion King, the sprites and big and bold, and there's plenty of colour to spruce things up even further. The action is all pretty standard stuff, but the variety of backdrops and foes ensures Nutz doesn't sink into the quagmire of boredom - and some of the later levels offer a real challenge. Ocean have a real flair for the platform genre, and Mr Nutz — whilst not the best game in their extensive catalogue — is a good entry to the Sega market for them. Give it a go, you won't be disppointed.

LOOKIN' GOOD

In terms of content, there isn't a great deal to seperate Mr Nutz from the myriad of platformers all ready in existence. However, the developers at Ocean's French office have tried to make Nutz excel in the graphical department, with the main sprite towering over the likes of Simba, Sonic, and othersuch platform greats, and equal attention given to the oncoming bad guys. For the anorak GWs out there, you may be interested that each foe has two death animations, with some splitting in half whilst others are squashed flat. By far the most impressive effect, though, is the grisly dismemberment of the game's first boss — the aforementioned giant. As Nutz leaps on to the poor so-and-so's head, the giant's eyes pop out, his tongue falls out, and his cranium eventually explodes. So much for the cutesy element, then...





GRAPHICS

92

▲ Large, brightly-coloured sprites. Stunning backdrops, and a large variety of well-realised enemies. Cool.

SOUND

87

▲ Inoffensive tinkly music to accompany the twee look.
▼ A little skimpy on the effect front.

PLAYABILITY

88

▲ Nothing we haven't seen before, but as playable as any other platform great you may care to think of.

LASTABILITY

85

▲ Later levels get very tough and add even more features to the basic game.
▼ A few more of the original ideas should have appeared earlier in the game.

VFM

87

▲ A reasonable price for an 8MEG platformer of this standard.

OVERALL

86

Not the most impressive game in Ocean's back catalogue, but one of the more polished platformers and certainly worth considering.









GAME TYPE
BEAT EM UP

PRICE TBA

BY INTERPLAY

RELEASE JANUARY

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: SLUGGISH
GAME DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE

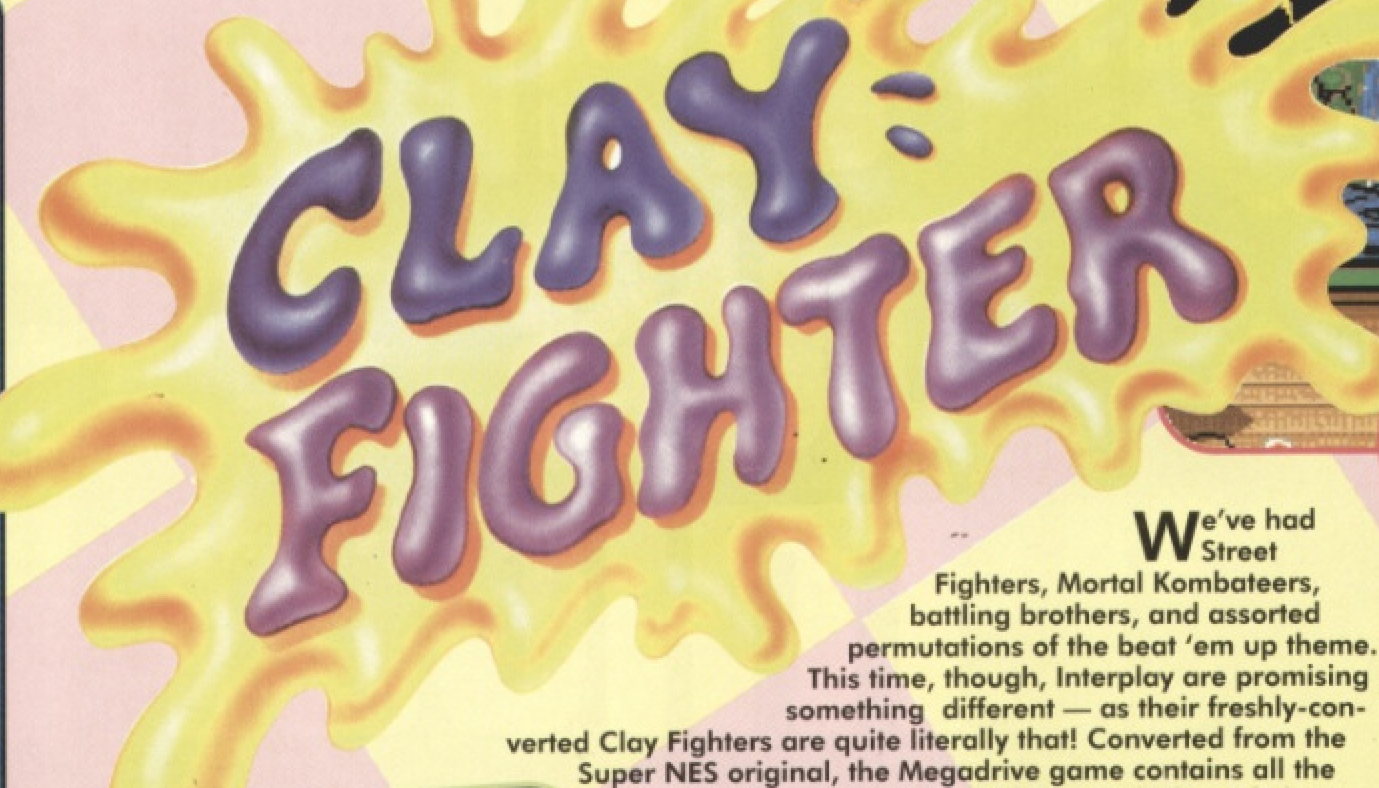
1ST DAY SCORE
BEAT ON EASY.

ORIGIN
Following Interplay's tie-in with the American equivalent to Play-Doh, Clay Fighter offers eight fighters made out of the stuff.

GAME BREAKDOWN



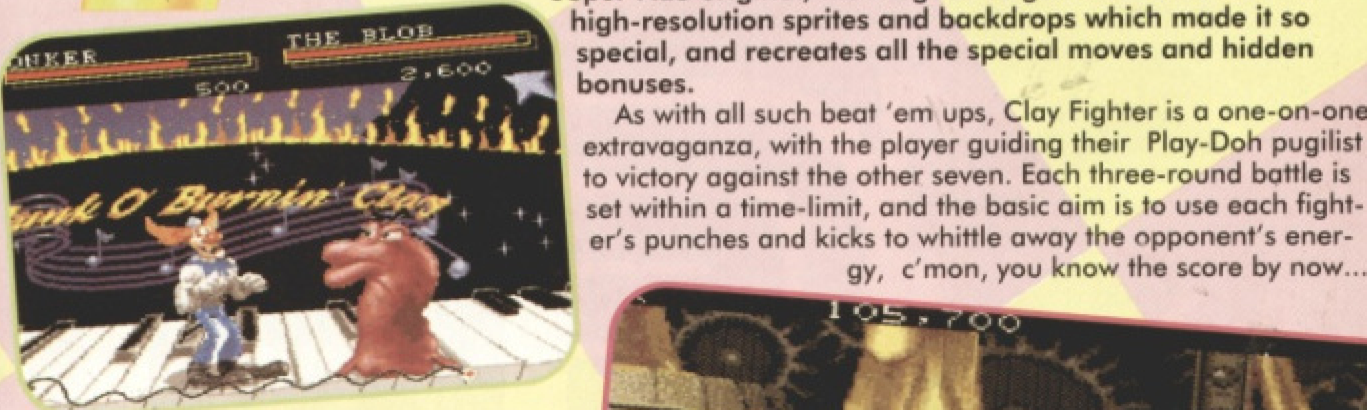
GAME AIM
Beat people up. But you knew that already.



CLAY FIGHTER

We've had Street Fighters, Mortal Kombateers, battling brothers, and assorted permutations of the beat 'em up theme. This time, though, Interplay are promising something different — as their freshly-converted Clay Fighters are quite literally that! Converted from the Super NES original, the Megadrive game contains all the high-resolution sprites and backdrops which made it so special, and recreates all the special moves and hidden bonuses.

As with all such beat 'em ups, Clay Fighter is a one-on-one extravaganza, with the player guiding their Play-Doh pugilist to victory against the other seven. Each three-round battle is set within a time-limit, and the basic aim is to use each fighter's punches and kicks to whittle away the opponent's energy, c'mon, you know the score by now...

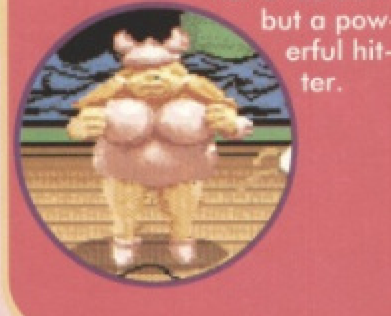




PUTTY-ING IT ABOUT

Eight bizarre fighters have gathered together to knock the stuffing out of each other. However, anyone expecting normal fighters such as Liu Kang or Ryu has go another think coming. See what we mean...

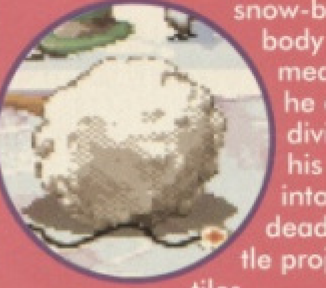
HELGA
A formidable Viking warrior, and one whose bulk makes her a tad slow but a powerful hitter.



TAFFY
Made entirely of chewy sweets, Taffy is endowed with elastic capabilities which make him the game's equivalent to SFII's Dhalsim.



BAD MR FROSTY
The Mr Frosty of countless kiddie sing-songs is far from kind and friendly. His snow-based body means he can divide his body into deadly little projectiles.





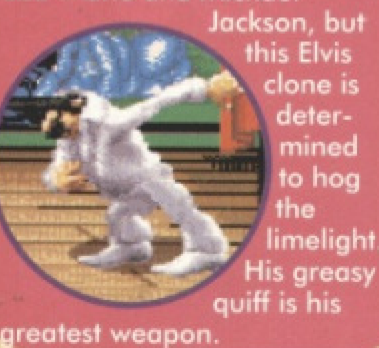
▲ Who is this piece of ring? Someone you get to meet much later.

SOUNDING OFF

One of the most impressive features of the Super NES original was the plentiful digitised sound. The Megadrive version has retained as much of this as possible, with Blue Suede Goo murmuring 'Thangyerverymuch' with every flick of his fringe, and Tiny uttering guttural nonsense at every opportunity. Sadly, the stunning digitised intro tune with the characters singing along has been lost somewhere along the line.

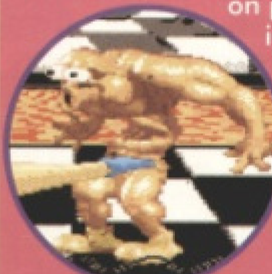
BLUE SUEDE GOO

He may not have been there for the marriage between Lisa-Marie and Michael Jackson, but this Elvis clone is determined to hog the limelight. His greasy quiff is his greatest weapon.



TINY

Not at all on the small side, and a real lunk of a fighter. A clay-based wrestler, and keen on performing mid-bout dissections.



BLOB

The most versatile fighter of them all. Blob is just that, but can morph into any one of a number of energy-sapping objects — a shoe or a cluster of fists, for example.



ICKY-BOD CLAY

Resembling a Scooby-Doo villain, Icky-Bod is a spectral entrant with a neat line in diving attacks.



KINDA SPECIAL

A beat 'em up without special moves would be like Zig without Zag — and Clay Fighter's are as bizarre as the Play-Doh pugilists are to look at. Each entrant has three specials, but, of the eight, Blob is the most versatile, with his morphing skills enabling him to transform himself into a cluster of boxing gloves, a large shoe (to administer the kicking to end all kickings), and a buzz-saw disc. Similarly, Helga has a number of weight-related jumps and kicks at her disposal, whilst Blue Suede Goo comes prepared with bum music notes and a greasy quiff!





COMMENT



STEVE

Oh dear, this is a very disappointing conversion. Whilst the Super NES version of Clay Fighter was never likely to become a classic of the genre, it was a bit of a novelty and a playable little game to boot. This Megadrive version, though, loses out in terms of both speed and animation, with the players reacting sluggishly to the joypad, and lurching from move to move. Yes, Clay Fighter has as many special moves as the likes of Street Fighter and its kin, but they never seem that likely and anyone with a GCSE in button pressing should be able to blag their way through to the final boss. Faults like these mean Clay Fighter just cannot compete against the likes of Capcom's game, and Interplay's entry to the beat 'em up genre is sadly just another contender KO'd in the first round.



▼ *Ickybod takes a swipe at Bonker's conkers.*

COMMENT

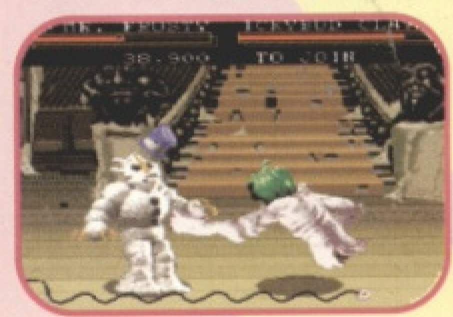


GUS

Clayfighter was a neat little game on the Super NES, but something has gone wonky in the conversion process, and before you start writing to Yob accusing me of putting down the Megadrive, I'm making the comparison because I don't think this version of Clayfighter is worthy of the machine. A combat game using rendered images of clay models is a novel idea, but Clayfighter has lost most of its clarity, with fuzzy characters and poor backdrops, and much of the animation seems to have gone out of the window too. But the game's main problem is mechanics and computer intelligence. The computer is a dire opponent, and in many cases repetitive moves allow you to steam through the game in an insipid manner. Despite the imaginative range of attacks, it often seems randomly decided who comes out best in an encounter — there's no clear contact. The nicest thing to comment on is the speech samples – load of them and extremely clear. This all wouldn't be half so disappointing if we hadn't seen the likes of SSFII or MKII in the last few issues. But alas we have.









GRAPHICS

84

▲ Absolutely stunning sprites with loads of detail and colour.
▼ Basic animation, and a tendency to jerk around.



SOUND

86

▲ Top-notch speech introduces each fight, and a nice enough tune opens the proceedings.



PLAYABILITY

60

▼ A potentially engrossing beat 'em up is reduced to the ranks of a mediocre button-beater.

LASTABILITY

57

▲ Eight fighters and a tournament mode. Cool special moves.
▼ Limited enjoyment due to hit and miss sprite detection.

VFM

54

▼ Not the greatest beat 'em up on the market it has to be said.

OVERALL

56

Graphically stunning, but fundamental flaws stop this being the classic it deserves to be. It could have been a contender...



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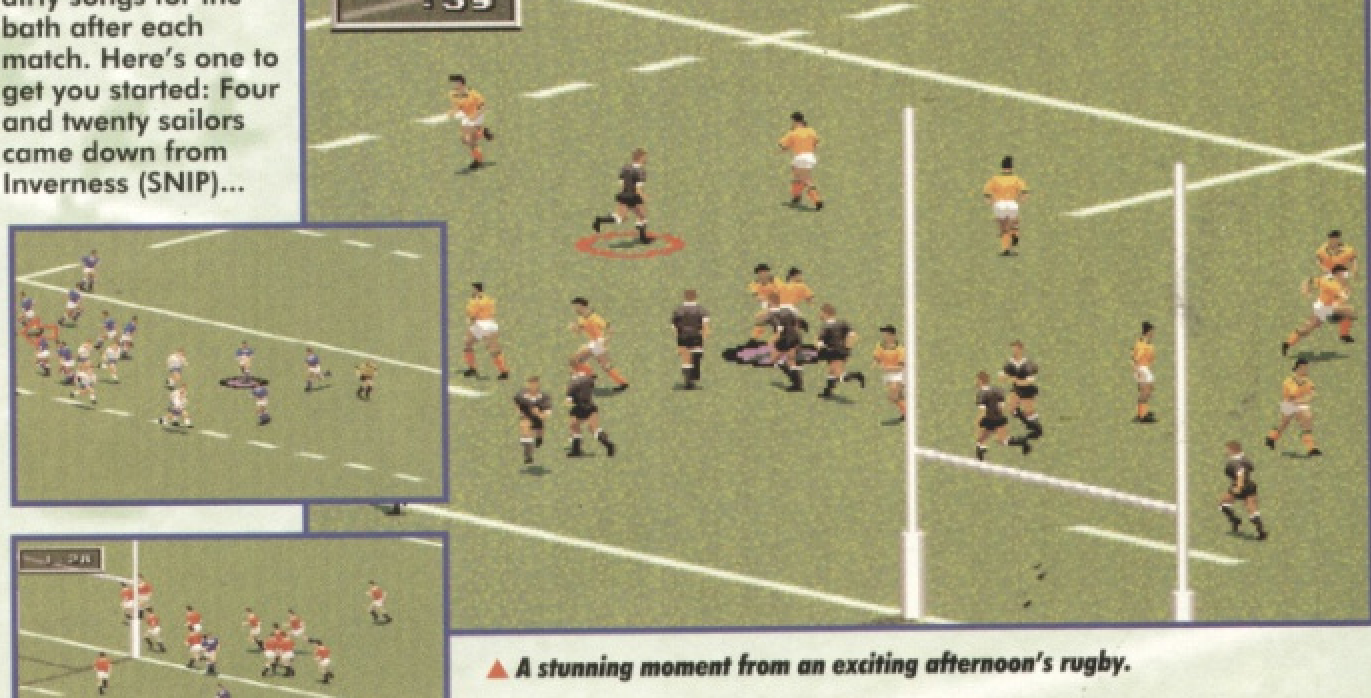


rugby w

Considering Rugby came about when a disgruntled soccer player picked up the ball and legged it towards the goal, it's surprising that Will Carling's favourite sport isn't called 'Cheating Sod.' But no, it was duly named after the place where the spoilsport grabbed the ball (and probably got his head kicked in straight after), which should also make us grateful the fateful game wasn't played in that Welsh town which ends in Gochgochgoch.

Still, whatever its origins, EA have deemed Rugby popular enough to immortalise as a Megadrive game. All the scrums, conversions and passing of the real thing have been ported over, but you'll have to supply your own dirty songs for the bath after each match. Here's one to get you started: Four and twenty sailors came down from Inverness (SNIP)...





▲ *A stunning moment from an exciting afternoon's rugby.*

odd shaped balls

'Hey!', you're probably thinking, 'that's just FIFA with an odd-shaped ball.' Very astute I'm sure. Actually, whilst Rugby does indeed use the same game engine as FIFA, Rugby has been written by EA's in-house development team in Slough, who have taken the opportunity to adapt the existing 3D routines and improve them. For instance, whilst FIFA only ever has some eight players on the screen at any one time, Rugby's many scraps and passing routines mean that both teams can be seen onscreen at once — in the region of thirty sprites! — but with no evident slowdown. Similarly, Rugby is graphically more refined than EA's classic kickaround, with neater sprites and more animation frames, including fumbles, jump catches, and fending off opponents.



orld cup '95





▲ The stadium goes dotty when you score.

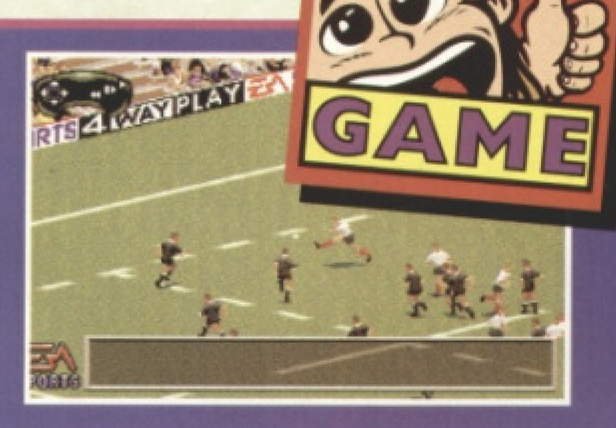
hooking flanker

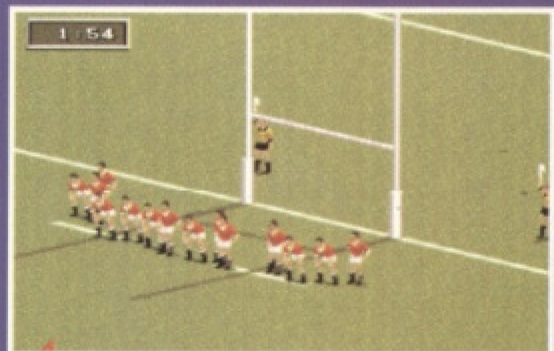
The joypad's three buttons are used to cram as many moves as possible into the conversion. Whilst kicking and passing are effected using the A and B buttons respectively, players in possession of the ball can also extend an arm to deter oncoming defenders by holding both buttons together. However, if the opposition are in possession, the button configuration is altered slightly to allow for tackles and blocks — with the C button giving the player a handy burst of speed. Scrums and bundles run along the same lines, with B used to hook the ball away towards a flanking player.

MEGA GAME

can you kick it?

Every time the ball is scrambled across the line for a try, the player is given five points. However, this can be upped by two more courtesy of the conversion kick that follows. For a conversion the ball is placed several metres away from the goal posts, and the player must punt it through the top bit of the goal 'H'. In the real thing, this proves extremely difficult, and EA have managed to make the game's conversions every bit as tricky. A power bar appears as the player lines up for the kick, and press C gradually fills the bar as the shot power increases. As the bar is filled, though, a small marker representing the accuracy of the kick is reduced and when the C button is pressed, a pointer whizzes towards the marker. Pressing C again stops the pointer and initiates the kick, and the closer the pointer stops to the marker, the straighter the kick.





COMMENT



STEVE

I used to hate Rugby as I could never see the appeal of grabbing someone's ankles only to get a muddy boot in the face. Still, EA's Rugby WC features all the skill and accuracy of the sport, but doesn't involve extensive dentist work after every game — so that's fine by me. For a game with so many moves, EA's Rugby is a dream to play. The joypad buttons effect different moves when the player is in possession of the ball or chasing it, and the range of tackles, shoves and drop kicks are simply awesome. As such, after some initial confusion with scrums and gaining possession, I was quicker off the wing than the meat in a KFC bargain bucket. Cynics will probably dismiss Rugby as a FIFA rip-off, but for me this is the more playable game. Absolute control is offered over the players, and this creates one of the best sims to appear under the EA Sports banner yet.

▲ Run blue, run like the wind.

League Standings

WEEK 1	Pl	Wo	Dr	Lo	Tr	Pt
Tonga	1	1	0	0	2	3
England	1	1	0	0	1	3
Fiji	1	1	0	0	0	3
New Zealand	1	0	1	0	0	2
United States	1	0	1	0	0	2
Ivory Coast	1	0	0	1	0	1
Portugal	1	0	0	1	0	1
EA Mauters	1	0	0	1	0	1

▲ Tonga is top, and you are bottom.

Possession Record

France | Morocco

Possession

Territorial Advantage

0 Scrums Won 0

0 Lineouts Won 0

▲ Who had what, how long they had it for and where they had it. So there.

optional extras

Rugby boasts a full complement of international sides, ranking from the likes of Japan and Paraguay to the more recognisable New Zealand and England squads. In terms of options, Rugby is up with the best with a variety of tournaments, tactic screens, and player information. The latter is particularly useful as it allows the player to double as a manager and replace wingers or defenders crocked by particularly heavy tackles.











▲ *Mind the bloodythirsty forwards, Marlon.*

COMMENT



GUS

After stumbling with tennis, the EA Sports label is again living up to its motto with a spot-on conversion (geddit) of a game its fans love with a passion. Rugby is so close that non-devotees may find it a little bewildering getting to grips with the controls and the messy on-screen action of mauls, rucks and scrummages (thankfully it comes with an excellent manual). But that's what Rugby is — a chaotic sport of pile-ons and stoppages, with moments of drama when scrum halfs make a great pass and a plucky back runs the pitch length to glory. Visually and aurally, EA have done tremendous work, the players looking superb as individuals, and also working convincingly as teams. The front-end of the game is as detailed and accessible as any before it, although the replay seems to record only a short segment of preceding play. Otherwise, you cannot grumble about teams or tourneys (oh, alright then — where's the Five Nations?). Ferociously fun, but be prepared to put in more effort than FIFA before getting results.

GRAPHICS 92

▲ Superb animation on the player sprites, and all moves you'd hope to see in a conversion. Stunning and with no slow-down whatsoever.

SOUND 82

▲ Satisfying 'oofs' and grunts, and all the expected crowd roars and intro ditties.
▼ Quiet moments during games are a little off-putting. Needs more 'oomph' occasionally.

PLAYABILITY 90

▲ Controls are simple to pick up, but combinations take a little time to master.
▼ Scrums and bundles often a little hit and miss.

LASTABILITY 91

▲ Enough teams and tournaments to put Will Carling off his Quorn bolognese for a month or two.

VFM 91

▲ The Megadrive doesn't have a decent Rugby game, so this should find a nice niche in the sports sim market. The answer to a lot of Q&A pleas...

OVERALL 90

A superb simulation which captures the rough'n'tumble nature of the real thing perfectly. Another bonzer EA conversion.



GENERA[TIONS] LOST



1 PLAYERS

8 MEG

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

PRICE TBA

BY TIME WARNER

RELEASE NOVEMBER

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: AVERAGE
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE

Reach the Scared Generator mystical

ORIGIN

A platform-exploration adventure from the school of Delphine's Flashback. Also reminiscent if X-Men on Megadrive.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM

Seek out the cause of the troubles plaguing Monobe's land with the help of the great suit of the Janitors.

In this mixed up crazy world civilisations come and go. We've had the Greeks, the Romans. Who knows, maybe we're next on the Great Check-List of ex-civilisations? Such mortal worries certainly aren't the concern of Monobe, Time Warner's latest gaming hero, as his futuristic techno civilisation upped and jumped ship long ago.

Swept by plagues, floods, and other assorted life-extinguishing occurrences, Monobe's world bears few reminders of the once grand and prosperous cities of centuries gone by. But finally, after decades of feudal life, the past has caught up, bringing with it bizarre electrical storms and mutant beings. As the chosen one, Monobe must seek out the source of these events in a platform adventure through his history.



COMMENT



PAUL

Initially I was unimpressed by what Generations Lost had to offer. The stylistic similarities with previously established titles – colour palette of Flashback and the movement of X-Men – niggled me in the originality stakes, and Monobe looks pretty poor. But once the game gets going it is apparent that there is far more to this than meets the eye. The storyline, at times painfully slow -burning, is remarkably engrossing and well-crafted, even reaching addictive status for some of the stages. In addition the puzzle element has been economically used to ensure progress is reasonably slow-paced – at times bordering on blimmin' frustrating. Quite frankly, Generations Lost has some nice features, but in today's gaming climate I can't see it keeping up with the very fierce competition.



BLASTS FROM THE PAST

Bonuses alone won't guarantee our King-To-Be the answers to his questions. But thankfully on his adventures, he encounters the occasional antique with enough juice left in it to give him a boost to his suit, more scope to his rope, added string for his swing, or plain 'ol store his current position.







TIONS

▶ A mystic map courtesy of Mystic Reg

▼ Dare you consult the great Kaschleenk mechanism?

APPLIANCE OF SCIENCE

As with any good quality suit of the Jani-tors, a full range of accessories are available to help young Monobe on his quest. Deposited in the electronic safes of the elders, only Monobe has the power to grab the goodies for his own needs. That is once he's found the sometimes hidden lock. Let's take a sneak peek at what's on offer in the future collection of the House of Keptan.

ERAD – A versatile part laser rope/ part blaster combo always at Monobe's side.

KEY – Handy for unlocking doors.

EXTRA LIFE – Cue 'World In Action' theme tune.

FAST ERAD – Bonus blasts for extra damage.

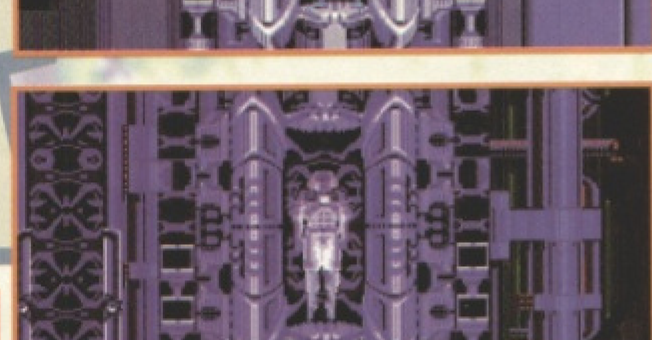
SEARCH AND DESTROY – Self-explanatory really, but only lasts a limited amount of time.

SHIELDS – Temporary invulnerability from enemy attacks and other hazards.



TRANSNODAL ENTERPRISE

Why walk when you can transnode? With a spot of multi-dimensional molecular-splitting magic Monobe can zap himself from location to location to piece together the clues. Once strapped in, a flick to the inventory screen shows the destinations accessible depending on Monobe's current security status.











▲" Excuse me, I seem to have lost my Aqua people".





TALKING 'BOUT MY GENERATION

It's a lonely life for poor Monobe. It seems that everybody either wants to hit him with lead pipes or throw bombs at his head. So it's good to see the occasional person giving a helping hand. From the outset, Monobe is given helpful advice from the village elder on the various sectors and their inhabitants. During the quest additional info is at hand from other village characters who have strayed beyond the village gates into the wilderness.

COMMENT



GUS

While Generations Lost could be labelled interesting, and for the most part rewarding, 'action-packed' hardly applies. A post-apocalyptic setting has been used before to conveniently explain why there aren't many enemy sprites around. In the early levels at least, the main gameplay hazards come from the inanimate backgrounds, and progress is mostly a matter of watching your step and remembering the layout. That's not to denigrate the good ideas liberally sprinkled throughout — the puzzles, and the Erad power hoist work well, and the graphics are consistent and well toned (however the 'joke' titles 'Jani-tor, Karhpantar etc. are plain naff). But these generations are likely to be lost in the flood of other more energetic platform games this Christmas.

GRAPHICS 82

▲Some very nifty design work on the levels and icons.
▼The Monobe sprite is very ungainly and unappealing.

SOUND 80

▲ Interesting futuristic tunes and FX, convincing animal and tribal samples.
▼More FX of the same quality would have been nice.

PLAYABILITY 78

▲A plot full of exploration and problem solving makes this surprisingly addictive.
▼The control system mars the gameplay with untimely deaths.

LASTABILITY 77

▲ The large and often complex levels promise a reasonable life span.
▼There's a little too much latitude on 'easy'.

VFM 74

▲ Too many other products are more deserving of the cash.

OVERALL 77

By no means a bad game, but lacks the same attractions of other platform releases during the build-up to Christmas.

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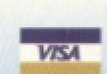
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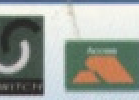
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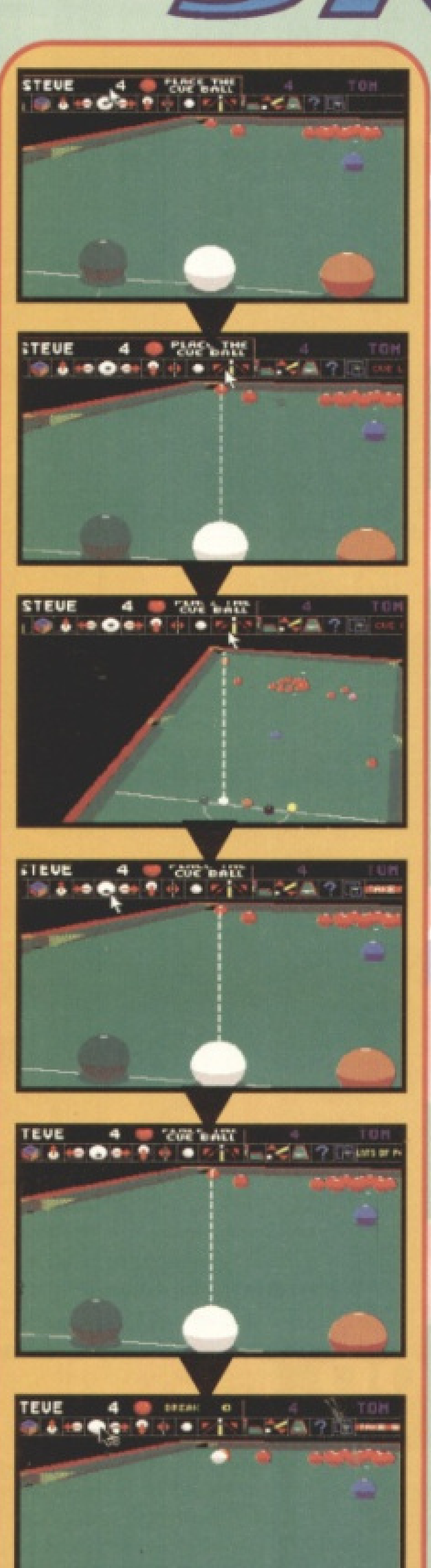


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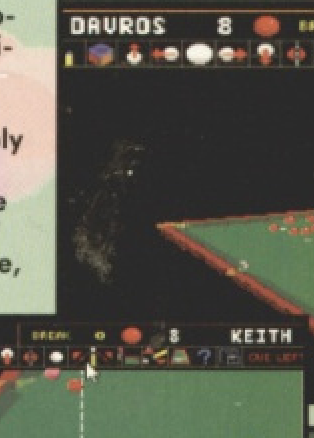
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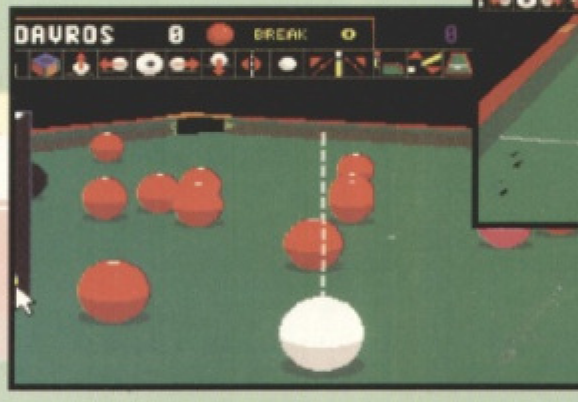




Virgin's long-awaited conversion of Jimmy White's is billed as the most realistic snooker simulation ever. Via the many icons shown above or to the side of the play area, the player can add spin to a shot, chalk the cue, and use a targeting line for those difficult shots. So what sets JWWS from the likes of side pocket and that crap Mindscape one of a few months back? Easy, you can view Jimmy's table from any angle: from high above, close enough to the baize to cause chin burns, and from on top of the cue ball.

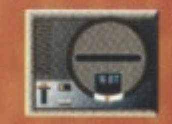
As ever, the basic aim is to pot the balls in order whilst scoring more points than your opponent. However, Virgin's game has chosen to ignore the smoky atmosphere associated with snooker halls, ignored the burly blokes who appear to prefer using cues to KO equally burly blokes, and you can supply your own drinks without paying £14 for a can of Coke – although these omissions are probably for the best. There isn't a Jimmy White community service sub-game in there, either. Funny that.





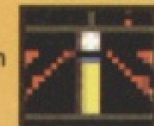
POCKET BILLIARDS

In addition to the basic one or two-player games, JWWS offers a number of extras to extend its lasting power. The one-player game features four computer-controlled players (the imaginatively-named Tom, Dick, and harry. Oh, and someone called Jimmy), and if these aren't up to your newly-acquired standards, Virgin have thrown in a number of trick shots for the player to tinker with or attempt. These feature ominous names like 'I did this once' and 'The most impossible shot in the world.' Just so you know what your up against! Finally, programmer, Archer Maclean, has also taken the chance to add a few extras over the Amiga original, including more ball animations if you take ages to line up a shot, a faster pan mode, and smoother screen update.



GOING FOR A JIMMY...

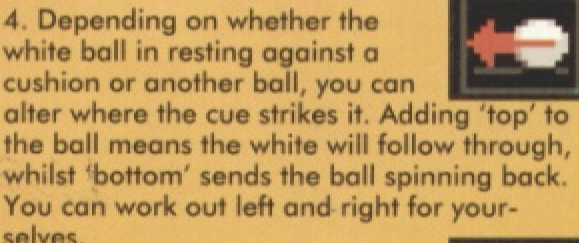
Getting all those balls into the table's six pocket is made easier thanks to the game's extensive icon system. Let's try that again shall we...



1. Line up behind the white and use the rotate icon to scan for the easiest-looking shot. Ah, that'll do...



2. Summon the targeting line and position it on the ball at the rough angle you reckon will send it rocketing into the pocket. Flash sods may want to pan away from the screen now in order to judge the angle from a better vantage point.



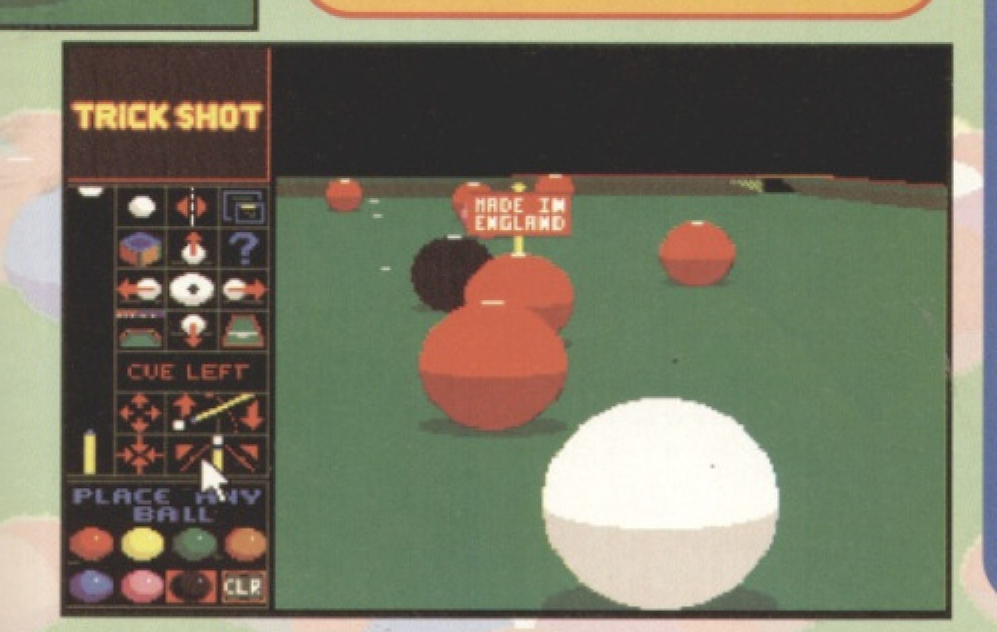
3. Having tinkered with the angle to annoy your mates beyond belief, suck your bottom lip through your teeth, tut a lot, and chalk your cue in anticipation. Repeat until they turn red and swear a lot.



4. Depending on whether the white ball in resting against a cushion or another ball, you can alter where the cue strikes it. Adding 'top' to the ball means the white will follow through, whilst 'bottom' sends the ball spinning back. You can work out left and right for yourselves.

5. The moment of truth. The cue icon reveals a larger pic of the wooden pointy thing which is drawn back further to add more power.

6. By now, your mates will have killed your pets and reverted to paganism whilst awaiting their turn. Put them out of their misery by finally clicking on the white ball icon. Alternatively, return to 3 and repeat. By rights the ball should go in...



COMMENT



GUS

This man Archer is the perfect emissary for computer snooker. He is after all, the Alex Higgins' talent of video gaming if you look at his past form. Two years of effort have created a corking translation of snooker that improves on the original and critically praised floppy versions. So many limp billiards/pool in the past made me think it was impossible to translate the game effectively, but JW's is a delight because of its authenticity to the game and flexibility, as well as being a damned good excercise in programming. And for once it's the actual table sport we want — and not some poxy Americanism!

COMMENT



STEVE

I loved the Amiga version of Jimmy White's Snooker, but this Megadrive version drops on it from a great height — and it's only a 4MEG cart! Every aspect of snooker has been recreated, with the table and balls viewed from any angle, and all manner of realistic shots on hand. The game's icon system is a doddle to pick up, and allows the user to alter the angle of the cue, add spin and be generally very flash with very little effort. Basically, if you have any preconceptions about snooker games being boring, prepare to drop them. JWWS is a stunning and original Megadrive game, and one which will outlast even the most ardent of platformers. Excellent.

GRAPHICS 73

▲ Snooker's dull to look at, right. Wrong. JWWS's table can be viewed from any angle, and the screen update is nigh-on perfect.

SOUND 65

▲ All the effects of the real thing are here.
▼ Hmmm, not a lot you could add admittedly. So they didn't bother.

PLAYABILITY 92

▲ Comprehensive, but incredibly easy to learn. As easy as picking up a cue and playing the real thing.

LASTABILITY 93

▲ Like the real thing, practice brings genuine skill, opening up a whole new ball game — literally.

VFM 93

▲ Less than buying a real table from Argos, and without the hassle of setting up every time (or waiting at the collection point for the box).

OVERALL 92

A different kind of game for the Megadrive, but a welcome departure from the norm. JWWS brings simulations into the 90s, and is destined to be the benchmark other sims are measured by.

STAR T
DEEP SPAC



1 PLAYERS

16 MEG

GAME TYPE: ADVENTURE

PRICE	TBA
BY	PLAYMATES
RELEASE	TBA

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: AVERAGE
GAME DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE

1ST DAY SCORE

Locate and eject all of the grenades

ORIGIN

Taken from the Star Trek inspired TV series, the game features Flashback-esque platform action with an RPG twist.

GAME BREAKDOWN



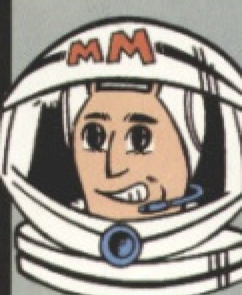
GAME AIM

Secure the peace of the Federation by helping Sisko to stop the Bajoran terrorists and find their suppliers of arms.

STARDATE:WOLF 46871.6. The fate of the galaxy rests in the hands of the inhabitants of an outpost space station known as Deep Space Nine. Once a stronghold of the Cardassian people, it was abandoned to Star Fleet control. But with the recent miraculous appearance of a wormhole, the station has become the hottest commodity in the galaxy. For this is no ordinary wormhole, but one that links the two sides of the galaxy reducing a journey normally taking 65 years at maximum warp, to a matter of seconds.

At the head of this political timebomb sits Benjamin Sisko. Previously First Officer on the USS Saratoga, he witnessed to destruction of the ship and the death of his wife at the hands of the Borg. Hoping to be posted to a quiet backwater of the galaxy, Sisko's plans took a nose dive, finding himself at the centre of a political crisis of epic proportions. Saboteurs have infiltrated the delicate peace of the station, and Sisko has to put an end to their plans.

COMMENT



PAUL

Okay, so Deep Space Nine, the TV series, wasn't as fab as the Next Generation crew, but that's no reason to do a hatchet job by releasing this shoddy piece of software. I am quite amazed this product actually saw the light of day. The graphics are unquestionably residing on the below-average-to-poor boarder line, making it an even more painful prospect to run everywhere and gather information. On the subject of RPG, Deep Space Nine makes the fatal mistake of forcing the player to cover distance to prolong the game life. Quite simply, the game isn't big enough to earn the title of an RPG. A few years ago this might have been passable, but I'm afraid by today's standards, it's nothing short of bargain bucket material.





▲ *"What do you mean, you can't hear the sea?"*

TO BOLDLY GO...

Sisko's investigations take him through many a familiar location from the TV series. The station is central to the action and character interaction, but Sisko jumps ship to investigate wrong-doings on Bajora, inside the wormhole, and on-board a Cardassian warship. Like an intergalactic jigsaw puzzle, as the pieces fit together, the picture becomes clearer and leads investigations deeper into the fabric of the Federation.









COMMENT

GUS

Now, how could a soap opera set on a space station not make a perfectly good video game? With Deep Space Nine, Novotrade show their penchant for innovation and mixing game styles (see the Exo-Squad review) but again it doesn't really succeed. At the start of the game it's annoying to have to wander aimlessly around the station searching for the right location. Surely as Sisko you would know your way around beforehand. There are lots of sloppy features, like crewmembers repeating the same phrases, and there's little pretence of proper interaction with the characters you meet. The action sequences are slightly better, a poor man's Rolling Thunder/Flashback. DS9 tries to be everything to everyone, and fails.

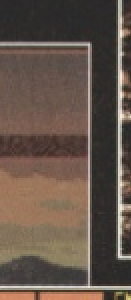
TERMINAL HELP

Essential to the smooth running of any space vessel is the central computer. In the course of his adventures, Sisko can log into the network to materialise platforms in the cargo bay, control the power on the USS Saratoga, and eliminate the

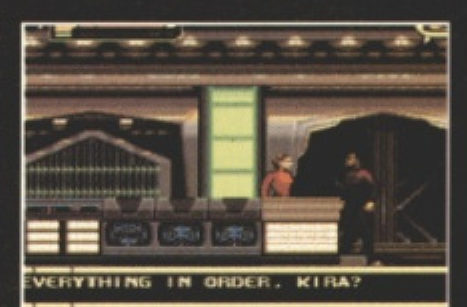


IT'S LIFE JIM

All of the familiar faces are here. From Ogo, to Quark, to O'Brien, Sisko must interact with them to solve the mystery. It's not all friendly chit-chat though, as Sisko frequently has to deal with devious Cardassians, disgruntled by Star Fleet's control of the quadrant. What's more, the player has at times to control Bashir and Kira who are more suited to certain missions









▲ *Essential software is hidden in the depths of the damaged Saratoga.*



GRAPHICS — 58

▲ The backdrops are faithful to the set design of the TV series.
▼ Sisko's animation lacks sufficient frames, giving the impression of jerkiness .

SOUND — 68

▲ The theme tune and FX have been successfully translated to the game.
▼ In-game music tends to drone on.

PLAYABILITY — 60

▲ The Sisko sprite moves quite quickly from location to location.
▼ The linearity of just chatting to people gets very boring.

LASTABILITY — 58

▲ There are a fair few missions to complete becoming progressively harder and harder.
▼ That is if you can stop yawning at the same old thing.re.

VFM — 59

▲ Deep Space Nine fans might be interested in this purchase.
▼ For everyone else there are wiser investments.

OVERALL — 59

With drab visuals and uninspiring gameplay, this is yet another half-hearted attempt at a TV license.

PSYCHO PINBALL







GAME TYPE
PINBALL

PRICE £44.99

BY CODEMASTERS

RELEASE NOVEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: NONE
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: VARIABLE

1ST DAY SCORE
21,143,000

ORIGIN
First appearing as a plank full of nails and a few marbles, the modern pinball table hit the streets in 1932.

GAME BREAKDOWN

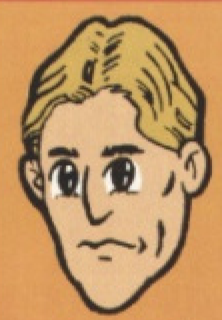


GAME AIM
Using a high-tensile spring, eject a ball-bearing onto an glass encased inclined table, liberally covered with lights and bumpers. Once in play use flippers to amass points.

British rockers The Who wrote a rock musical extravaganza about them. The State of New York banned them for 34 years. What are they, you may ask? Pinball tables, of course! And they are set to take the Megadrive by storm during the Yuletide period with the latest offering from the men in white coats at Codemasters, Psycho Pinball.

Boasting a tonne of highly complex mathematical equations for the ball and its reactions to the playfield, Psycho Pinball promises to be the most realistic pinball sim to date. So without much more ado, allow me to introduce your host, part-time pinball, and resident armadillo, Psycho!

COMMENT



PAUL

By their very nature pinball sims are always surrounded by an air of uncertainty. As I'm sure any pinball player will tell you, it's the feel and history of the game, not just the visuals and sounds, that makes them want to play. And I have to say that Codemasters have somehow managed to capture this very essence on a console. The feel is genuine and solid, but more importantly they have overcome the age old problem of slow scrolling to make this the most playable console pinball game I have seen. Yet as with all pinball sims it comes apart at the seams in the number of tables department. And hence it is banished to the 'hugely impressive, but not so huge' realm of console simulations.

BEARING UP

In a radical break from your everyday pinball game, the techies from Codemasters have included bonus stages more fitting to a platformer than a flipper-fest. Accessible from the 3 single tables, the ball transforms into the lovable little character, Psycho, who ends up gallivanting from carriage to carriage on a runaway Wild West train, or fixing a leak in a whale belly.

Blast off to the moon by activating the rocket bonus for a sub-game of Moon Squares.

Light up the 3 spooks leading to the Trick or Treat marquee for phantom flipperdom!

FOUR TIMES TABLES

The action pings over four themed tables, Fairground, Wild West, Abyss, and Trick or Treat. Each table takes its pick from the juiciest traditions of pinball style – ramps, tubes, ball-locks (tee-hee), bumpers, jackpots – and blends them with the style of the playing field. For the multi-table mode, the Fairground acts as a gateway to all the other tables, but only once you've unlocked the portal to the new table.



GRAPHICS 89

▲Smoother than your smooth-talking bar steward, the scrolling has to be seen to be believed. Otherwise solid and simple graphics faithful to the original designs.

SOUND 87

▲ Excellent FX reflecting the plinks and plonks of a real table.
▼Music on sometables tends to drone.

PLAYABILITY 90

▲100% addictivity. A strong will is required to put this down. And a perfect difficulty gauge.

LASTABILITY 83

▲The arcade bonus levels are tricky and will require a lot of practise sessions.
▼Needs to have more tables and more variation on the playfields.

VFM 80

▼ MEGs costs bucks, but a hefty price tag for only 4 tables.

OVERALL 86

A truly superb pinball sim in its own right, but as ever with pinball games, let down by the lack of variety.

COMMENT

GUS

Williams, Bally Midway, Gottlieb, Data East — you get my drift? These name should get any pinball fan salivating, and the same sort of person will have a ball with Psycho Pinball. Codemasters have produced four storming tables, which look and play terrifically and capture the most important element of all — feel. I feel Paul's being a bit unfair about longevity, no other console pinball game offers more variety than Psycho, and anyway, the point for real fans is amassing higher scores. The layouts are ace, both in number of features and how bonuses are constructed, and the game uses an effective dot matrix display for lots of little sub-games. Graphics are absolutely superb, with faultless scrolling and a crispness to the layouts that prevents confusion when the game is rocketing. The range of speeds and difficulty levels is wide. Psycho makes mincemeat of Dragon's Revenge, Crue Ball or Sonic Spinball, it even tops Dragon's Fury. In short, it's flippin' magic!

Get off your horse and drink your milk in the Wild West corral.

You'll have a whale of a time (arf, arf!) via the Abyss portal.

ECCO The Tides of Time



He swims, he sings, he flies through the air (?!), and he was the star of one of last year's biggest console hits. Ladies and gentlemen, introducing Ecco the Dolphin in his all new bottle-nosed, marine-exploring, time-travelling, Vortex-bashing adventures. Ecco certainly caused a tidal wave of attention last year with his aquatic antics, and is now set to rule the high seas once again.

Following the defeat of the Vortex Queen last episode, Ecco made his escape to Earth in a pod. The matter was settled, or so he thought, as unbeknown to our starry-browed chum, the Queen had got a foothold on the pod and scammed a free ride back to the deep blue yonder. Rumours spread of the Queen's return, and in jumps Ecco to save the day. A task that will take him to the end of the Earth and Time itself. Hold onto your dorsals as we dive into the 16MEG voyage to the bottom of the sea...

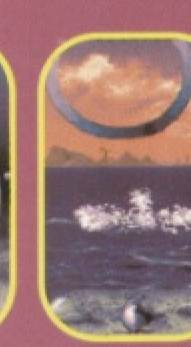
MEGA GAME

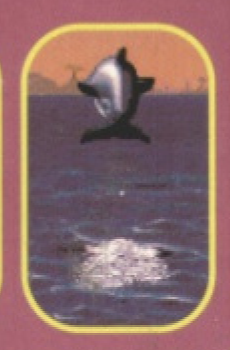
FLIPPERING HECK

Flippers alone maketh not a speedy dolphin. But thanks to the Atlanteans and their teleport rings, Ecco can travel vast distances in a fraction of the time. In these spectacular 3-D sections Ecco must peg it through the rings, above and below water, while avoiding sea-bed hazards. But miss more than five rings and it's back to the start.









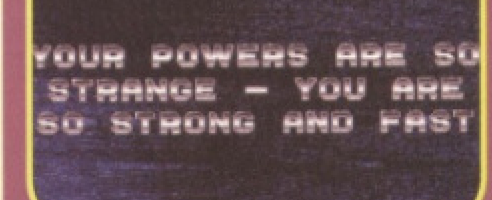
COMMENT



I remember the first Ecco as being one of the highlights of Christmas 1992 (although you lot had to wait until the New Year for it). The first Ecco kept its depth well hidden, with even the initial stages being very tough. The sequel has a much more lenient difficulty curve, generally making the game more appealing to the broad mass of gamesplayers. I think this is a fine sequel, with just the right mix of elements from the previous Ecco and new avenues of gameplay. However, some people complained that the first game was slow and boring, so I strike a note of caution. You'll only get the most out of Tides of Time if you're the sort of gamesplayer to invest time and mental energy in a cart. If you are the rewards will be great.

SOLE MUSIC

It may sound like a Geiger counter turned loose on Five Mile Island above the water, but beneath the waves, dolphin language is the song of the oceans. Apart from a means to communicate with other marine life, Ecco's song can also be used as a weapon, a key to open gateways, and a force to move objects.

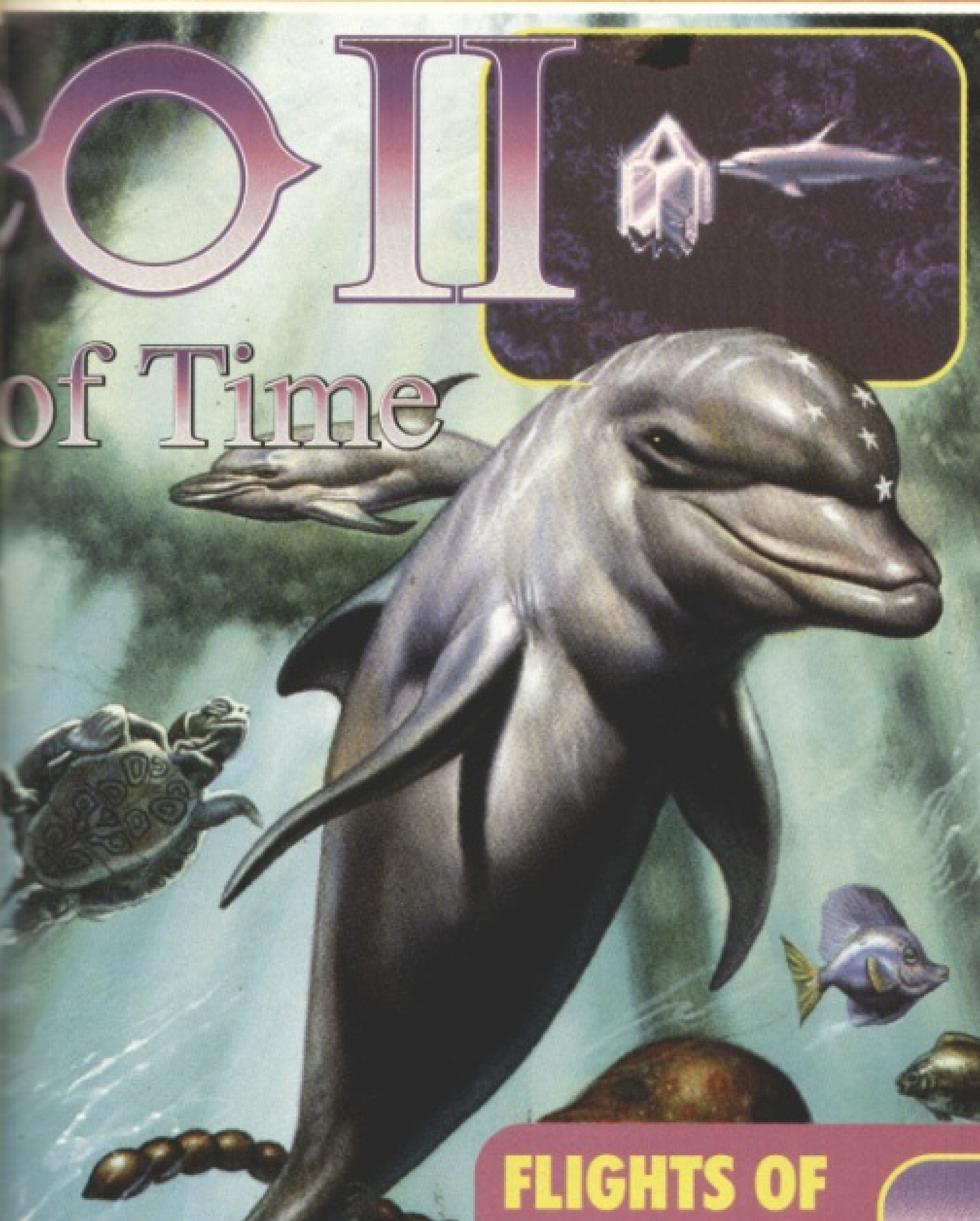


▲ *Something tells me this could be an important message...*











COMMENT

PAUL

Original gameplay in these days of re-hashed genres is always commendable, this certainly being the case for the original Ecco. And instead of resting on their laurels, Novotrade have gone all out to produce the best Ecco product to date. The task is vast as well as varied and incorporates stacks of great new story-lines and features – the voyage to the future obviously inspiring the designer's creative juices. But beware ye of faint joypad, as the difficulty setting is rock hard at times and requires thought and reflexes. A downright brilliant second outing for dolphin-kind.

GRAPHICS

90

▲Atmospheric and beautifully crafted, capturing sub aqua life. Impressive 3-D sections.

▼Not a great deal of variation in the backdrops.

SOUND

85

▲Soothing New Age techno that gathers pace when the action picks up.

PLAYABILITY

91

▲The natural control system combined with the adventure/exploring element makes this a real treat to play.

LASTABILITY

93

▲ The game environment is absolutely massive and the challenge pushes the player to the limit. A winner on this front.

VFM

89

▲ Double the original Ecco with plenty of new treats makes it worth the cash.

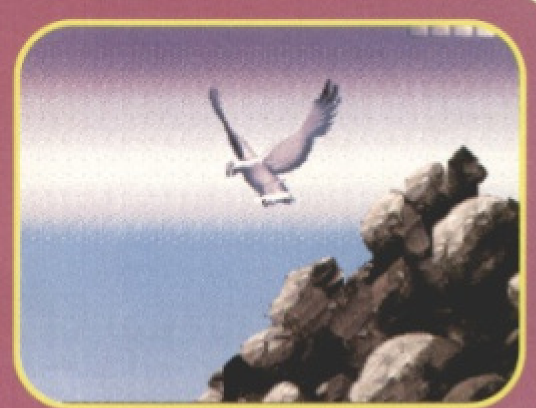
OVERALL

91

A fantastic sequel, building on the original's revolutionary gameplay and exploiting a whole new massive adventure.

FLIGHTS OF FANCY

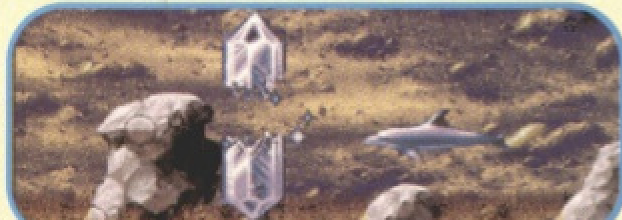
It's quite an evolutionary leap from dolphin to albatross, in Ecco 2 anything is possible! Cliff faces can be a bit of a trial for your average marine mammal, but in the shape of a bird Ecco can fly from pool to pool.



AIR STREAMS

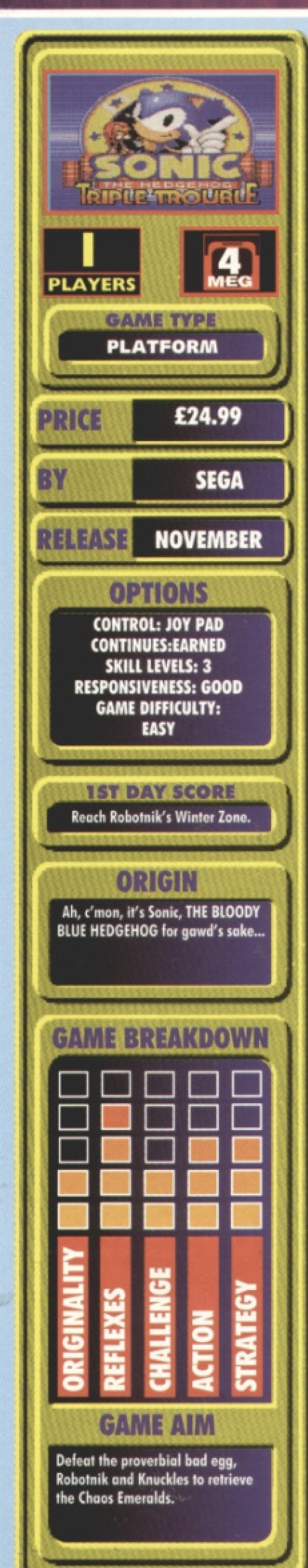
The future... Dolphins have made a fair bit of progress since the days of fooling around and laughing at the humans in their aquariums. These guys and gals have not only discovered the power of telekinesis, but have constructed water ways in the sky to link every ocean. Control in the tubes is tough as it is easy to break through the film holding the water.

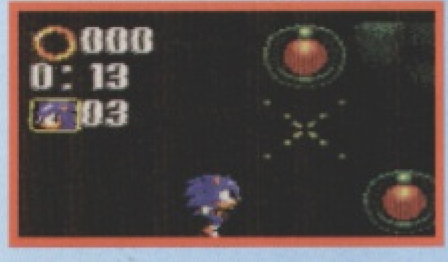






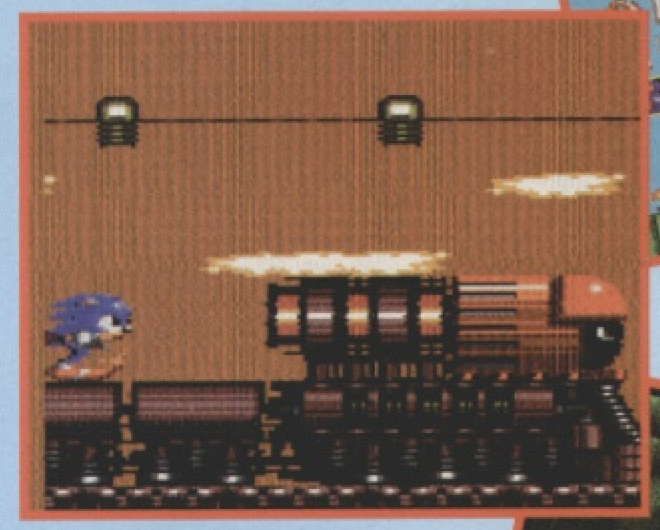
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG TRIPLE TROUBLE





Cheeky Mr Knuckles, not satisfied with whipping up a right royal stink on the Megadrive, has finally managed to get his pink profile on the Game Gear. Sick to the back teeth of Sonic returning the Chaos Emeralds to the birds and bunnies, Robotnik has conned Knuckles into flattening the hedgehog once and for all — so much for being a good guy in Sonic And Knuckles...

Although loosely based on the madcap antics of Sonic 3, this is purely on a thematic level. The Acts have been redesigned, re-baddified, re-bonus-boxed, re-eveythinged in fact. What's more the character sprites have been given a quick dose of quick-grow potion and a splash more animation to make them the biggest and the smoothest to hit the Gear. Blimey.



▲Sonic rides bareback on the Nightmare Express.

▲You're going down, my son!

TWIN TURBO

Spines or fur, the choice is yours. Being such ace mates, there's no hard feelings when it comes to picking the best guy for the job. But Sonic does have a new trick up his sleeve with a new turbo sprint device installed in his boots, allowing him to scale new obstacles and loops. To counter this new power, Tails' twin turbo-ed derrière comes in very handy for bonus box collecting in those hard-to-reach places.









COMMENT



STEVE

A new Sonic game should be the highlight of any Game Gear owners year — the highlight of any format's year, for that matter, but Sonic seems to be going through the same mid-life crisis here that Sonic and Knuckles represents on the Megadrive. There just doesn't seem to be much more to do on the machine that hasn't done before, and though this is the prettiest Sonic 8-bit game without doubt, much of the gameplay is BLAND, an adjective I never thought I'd use on the Maestro. If you want Sonic at his Game Gear best at the mo, get Spinball, and as for a career relaunch — well if Joanna Lumley can do it, so can you, kid!

PINK PIMPERNEL

Originally the keeper of the Chaos Emeralds on Mobius, Knuckles teamed up with Robotnik after catching Sonic red-handed as he was trying to repossess the precious treasures. Conned by Robotnik into believing Sonic was the bad guy, Knuckles now sits at the end of levels waiting to throw our boys into a pit of lava.



▼Let's go surfin' now, everybody's learnin' how.



COMMENT



PAUL

Sega really have pulled out all of the stops in the visual department to make Sonic in Triple Trouble's backdrops and characters the best to grace the Game Gear. No longer do we have the scrawny-looking character sprites losing themselves in the foliage. Quite honestly these fellas wouldn't look out of place on the Megadrive! But the increase in size has obviously compromised the gameplay, as enemies are far and few between. Unfortunately this results in the game being reduced to collecting rings and spin-smashing through walls. Nothing new, I'm afraid, but fans of Sega's blue hero should be more than content.

▼I'll get you my pretty!

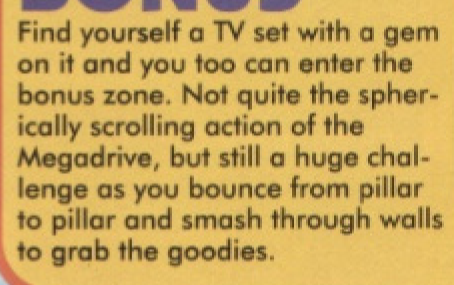


▼Sonic hangs tough against the mighty Hunter.



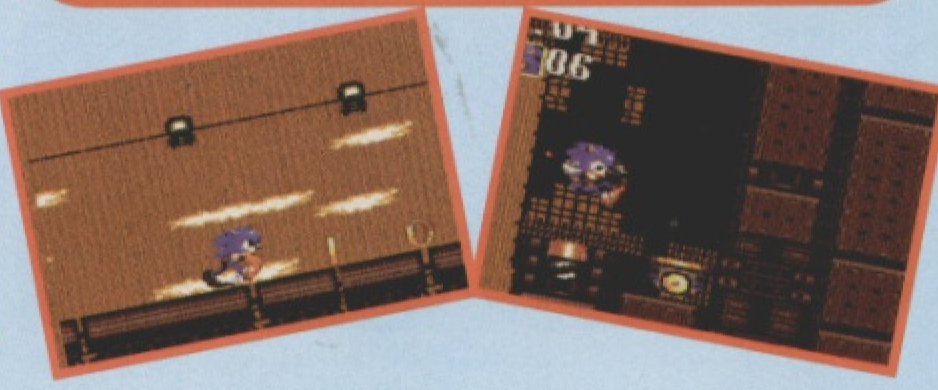
BONUS

Find yourself a TV set with a gem on it and you too can enter the bonus zone. Not quite the spherically scrolling action of the Megadrive, but still a huge challenge as you bounce from pillar to pillar and smash through walls to grab the goodies.









GRAPHICS — 93

▲The sprites are outstandingly large and super fluid to boot. Not to mention the fantastic backgrounds.
▼Shame there aren't more baddies to bash.

SOUND — 80

▲The normal collection of bouncy tunes to egg the boys along.
▼Nothing new though.

PLAYABILITY — 87

▲A worthy member of the Sonic clan – speedy controls, stacks of collectables – great fun.
▼Little real challenge.

LASTABILITY — 81

▲The different playing styles of Sonic and Tails allow for exploration and an extended lifespan.
▼Difficulty setting needs to be tougher.

VFM — 82

▲A great looking product that will push the Gear to its limit.
▼But will be too easy to complete.

OVERALL — 85

Graphically far superior to the two previous Sonic Game Gear versions, but sadly lacking surprises and gameplay innovation.



1 PLAYERS

GAME TYPE
SHOOT 'EM UP

PRICE TBA

BY NAMCO

RELEASE NOVEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 2
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY:
EASY

1ST DAY SCORE
300,000

ORIGIN
Converted from Namco's own Starblade coin-op of 1991 by Namco Home Tek. Starblade has a Star Wars-esque plot.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Eradicate the threat from mechanised planet Red Eye by piloting your lone ship through its defences.

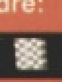


The most intelligent and evil minds in the galaxy have conspired to create Red Eye: a mechanised natural satellite with a hollow core, able to move about the galaxy annihilating planets by means of its incredible power source, Octopus. To your alarm, Red Eye has entered the solar system of the Mother Planet and is on a clearly defined course towards it.

Being a peaceful world, your guard was well and truly down. The defensive fleet is crippled by a surprise attack, and only the Geo Force fighters have a chance of striking at the heart of Octopus and destroying Red Eye.

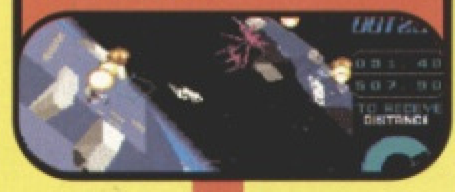
BATTLE STATIONS!

The battle takes place over a series of stages, each progressively closer to Red Eye. A meter in top right of the screen informs you of the remaining distance. The areas are:



HOME FLEET

The initial fight wends its way between your own flaming battle cruisers.



ASTEROID FIELD

Stem the oncoming squadrons and outmanoeuvre the asteroid defences.



ENEMY FLEET

Your chance to wreak havoc on the spacecraft carriers and motherships of the enemy.



CITY

A white-knuckle ride is called for to outflank defences on the path to Octopus.



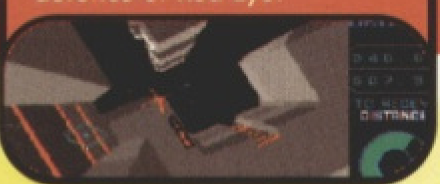
CANYONS

Steep walled ravines protect the entrance to Red Eye's command centre.

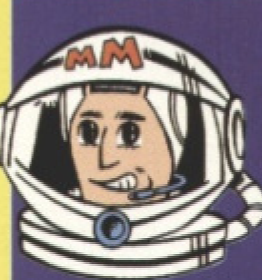


MAZE DEFENCES

A dense construction in space forms the last extra-terrestrial defence of Red Eye.

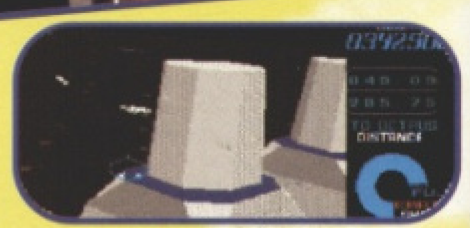


COMMENT



PAUL

Wah-hey, whack on some headphones, sit in a darkened room, and this is one heck of a sensory overload. The visuals are stunning, packing the screen with technically impressive graphics. But the downfall of this genre is, as ever, the pre-programmed flight path. Interaction with the surroundings is pitifully minimal, resulting in a point-and-shoot affair that after the first few goes becomes samey. A good, but ultimately short-lived, effort.



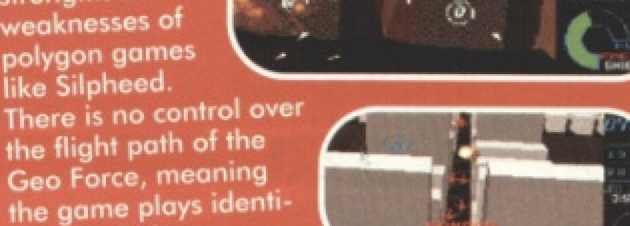
▲ *Like at the size of that pair...of scenery towers.*



▲ *This is a deck of sitting ducks, if you get my drift.*



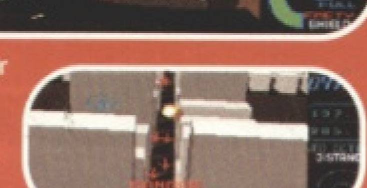
RBLADE



▲ *I give you the city of Legopolis.*

VECTORY IS MINE

Converted quite faithfully from the arcade, Starblade has both the strengths and weaknesses of polygon games like Silpheed. There is no control over the flight path of the Geo Force, meaning the game plays identically each time. However, unlike Silpheed, the game is played from a first-person perspective, with a trigger sight. In order for the Mega-CD to match the level of action on screen, some of the filled-in polygon ships have become wire-frame images.



COMMENT



GUS

Not withstanding Namco's careful and comprehensive conversion, the main problem is changing the game from an arcade to home format. Starblade is both visually and aurally impressive, successively creating a 'Star Wars' atmosphere. I also think it's more exciting as a polygon game than Silpheed, which is really just pretty Galaxians. What's more, the trip to Red Eye is action-packed across every kilometre. But the snag is that it's always the same trip. What's great for the odd 50p in the arcade does become a dubious investment at £50. Of course, chasing high scores and even completing the game gives it lasting interest, but Starblade doesn't offer great depth.





PASS THE PORT

Starblade utilises the Mega-CDs digital sound capability to create the babble of an intercom. You frequently hear the advice and orders of your wingmen (though these bafflingly bear little resemblance to what's going on). There are also lots of surround sound explosions, that deserve a good stereo system for full effect.

OCTOPUS CORE

Accessed by a narrow duct, the core is quite resilient to attack and launches a barrage of protective fire.





▲ *The sweep through the cruiser formation is really quite neat.*

GRAPHICS — 90

▲ More than an adequate stab at the grandiose space battle visuals of the arcade.
▼ Limited colours, wire-frame compromises and a small portion of the screen used.

SOUND — 89

Excellent explosions and effects, and the CD vocal track is mostly clear.
▼ The commands of your colleagues are often repeated and have no context to the action.

PLAYABILITY — 86

▲ The trigger happy will be in laser heaven on the way to Red Eye. Gets tough.
▼ No control over movement other than the cursor. It's shallow gameplay.

LASTABILITY — 70

▲ High scores to chase. The epilogue after Red Eye is tough.
▼ The route and the enemies are always the same. Quickly becomes repetitive.

VFM — 73

▼ Starblade at home doesn't compare favourably with a cheap thrill on the coin-op.

OVERALL — 75

An extravagance for shoot 'em up fans, but by no means a bad game. Just one not naturally suited to a console.



JURASSIC PARK RAMPAGE EDITION

The inhabitants of Isla Nubar certainly have caused a stir with the peoples of the world. And the World's eyes are set to focus one more on the small tropical isle following the video release of Jurassic Park. To add fuel to the fire Sega have taken the story one step further, with mad scientists out to unleash the oversized reptiles on the unsuspecting world.

In a distinctly different style to the slow-moving original, Rampage Edition pits Dr Grant or a Raptor against the mercenaries left to ensure potential saboteurs are eliminated. As Dr Grant, the player can use whatever weaponry comes to hand, whilst the Raptor has only its claws and tail to fall back on.

RAPTOR ATTACK

Being a stickler for tradition, Raptor has kept his claw and teeth attacks, but this time round, Dr Grant's armoury has the welcome bonus of weapons that actually kill (as opposed to the stun business of past). Just look at the array of pick 'em up dino-toasters.

FLAME THROWER

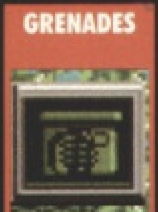


MACHINE GUN





GRENADES



CATTLE PROD



SHOTGUN



DART GUN



COMMENT



STEVE

I can see that Sega were hoping for a fast-paced blaster which starred the brilliant reptile creations from the film, but what has emerged is a sad, shuffling OAP of a blaster. It fails to succeed as either a platformer or a shoot 'em up, with the action ambling along, and the dinosaurs and mercenaries offering little hassle. Average sums this up nicely, but the film on sell-thru instead.



1-2 PLAYERS	8 MEG
PRICE	TBA
BY	VIRGIN
RELEASE	DECEMBER
GAME TYPE	SPORT

Dino Dini's GOAL



With a name resembling a Pizza base/ Sorbet manufacturer, Dino Dini and his Goal are warming up on the Megadrive touchline. For the uninitiated, Dino is the guy who created the Amiga classic, Kick Off all those years back. Since then he has continued his plans for footy domination with Kick Off II (which became the incredibly lame Super Kick Off for the Megadrive), but seemed to disappear when those young whippersnappers Sensi and FIFA appeared.

Having been deposed from his numero uno spot for nearly a year, Dino has returned with Goal, another conversion from the Amiga. Using Kick Off's bird's-eye view, and boasting all the rules and tactics from the real thing, Dino's newie also features a unique zoom mode (Zoom-o-vision?) which closes up on the action when things get exciting.

COMMENT

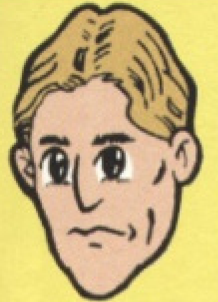


STEVE

Goal is the game US Gold's Super Kick Off should have been. With his Amiga Kick Off experience behind him, Dino Dini has created an incredibly fast kick around which more than matches Sensi in the playability stakes. Goal speeds along at a stunning pace, yet proves eminently controllable, and extremely addictive. Control over the ball is tricky at first as there's no 'glue ball', but it soon becomes second nature — as does mastering aftertouch. With plenty of options and gameplay in spades, Goal comes heavily recommended.



COMMENT



PAUL

Hmm, this is a very sorry excuse for a plat-former. It doesn't start of well, with clumsy graphics and bland backdrops giving an indication of the bleak gameplay. Whilst Rampage Edition is a faster-moving game than the original, it's all so dull top play with very little variety. Granted, the dino-riding bit was a laugh, but even this cannot save the game from obscurity. Don't believe the hype, and give this a miss.





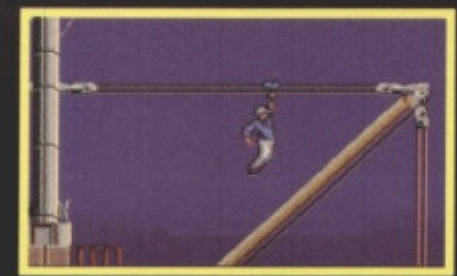
Based more on the book than the film, some of the locations may appear to be a little unfamiliar. Both the Aviary and the Rapids sections were unfortunately left out of the Spielberg vision, but add variation to Grant's confrontations with the dinos. More familiar sections include a piggy-back ride on the Ostrich-like Gallimus, and the mayhem at the stormy docks.











GRAPHICS	**67**	Drab in every respect.
SOUND	**56**	Awful effects, and very little in the way of music.
PLAYABILITY	**70**	Easy enough to get to grips with...
LASTABILITY	**45**	.. nothing interesting to keep you playing, though.
VFM	**45**	You're joking aren't you? Forget it.
OVERALL	**59**	A good idea, but poorly implemented.

Buy this and you'll be left hanging out to dry!

EXTREME CLOSE-UP

All the expected footy features have been included, with the required number of leagues, cups, kit options and corners. In terms of graphics, Goal looks very similar to Kick Off, but the sprites look better and the afore-mentioned zoom mode makes an enormous difference. The latter can be brought into play at any time, with the action focused on after kick off and switched via a simple press of the Start button.



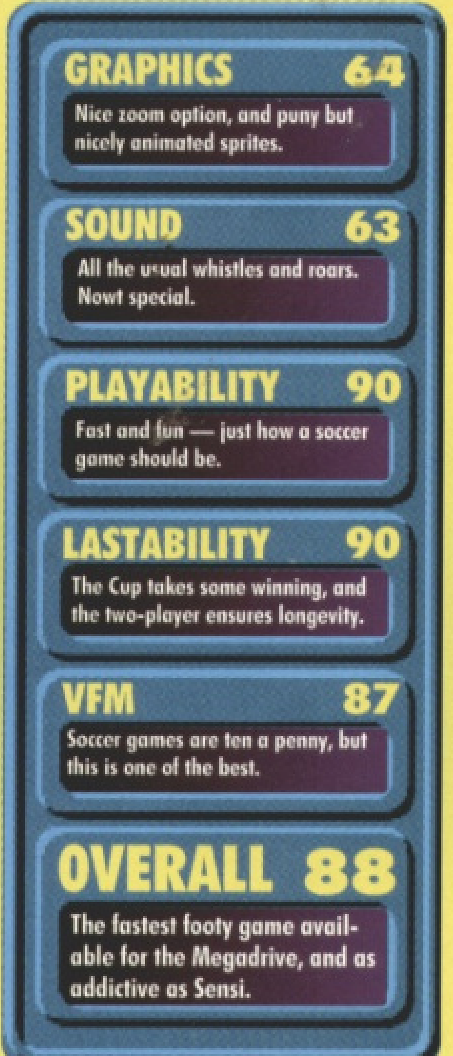


COMMENT



PAUL

Dino Dini really has outdone himself with this speedy, but elegant kick about. Graphically on a par with Sensi, the scrolling is silky smooth and turbo-charged. But what really sold me was the challenge presented by the ball control. Often footie games have the feeling that your not always in control, but tackles this problem superbly, if initially, infuriatingly. To top if off the loads of teams and player editor options make this a hot cup contender.





LETHAL ENFORCERS II Gun Fighters



Um palefaces are in heap big trouble. Um banditos and heap bad robbers have taken over um settlements. Help comes from white mountains in form of man in white hat, shiny stars on his cowhide boots.

Um dapper palface arrive to scalp um bandits and robbers using his pointy bang stick. However, if he enter redface territory we make him and his enemies pay with a haircut even um Robbie Williams of um Take That would baulk at...



▲ *Bad Boys (Western) Inc. with one missing.*

COMMENT

GUS

Steve's comments are entirely justified, but at least this a damn sight better than the original Lethal Enforcers, with its paultry range of static screens and enemies appearing singly. The sequel is pacier, with more scenic and play variety. What I would have liked to have seen is more interaction with the scenery. If you liked the first and have a Justifier (you really must play it with the gun) this is actually up your Main Street.



INNOCENT VICTIM

COMMENT

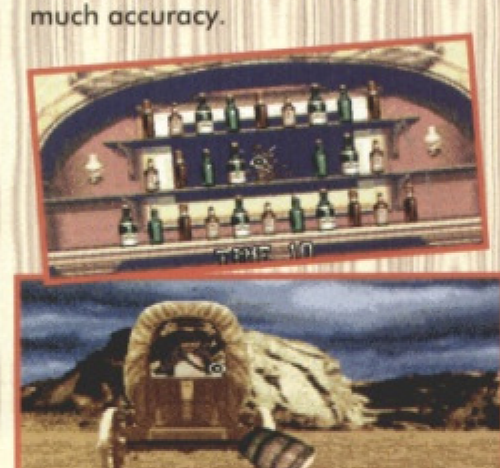


STEVE

The gangster setting may have changed , but cowboys and indians cannot disguise Lethal Enforcers II's dismal gameplay. Whilst picking off the assorted bad guys and bosses is initially entertaining, Lethal II is shallower than a kiddie's paddling pool, and even playing it with a Justifier isn't enough to keep anyone interested. The coin-op at least had fancy animated graphics. Without them this is the first real Konami Klunker.

EXTRA POINTY BANG STICKS

Initially, our unseen hero is armed with a trusty six-shooter, however, shooting particular baddies reveals a glowing power-up which temporarily enhances the player's firepower-including a Gattling gun and cannon which doesn't require much accuracy.



BANG! YOU'RE DEAD

The arrival of the assorted bandits and roughnecks follows a set order, but their sheer number in later stages ensures Lethal Enforcers II isn;t just shooting fish in a barrel. Each level is rounded off by a boss of some kind you requires dozens of hits, whilst later stages see the addition of indians firing arrows.

GRAPHICS 69
Attractive but murky digitised characters and backdrops.

SOUND 51
Digitised speech for bad guys, but music and effects are limited.

PLAYABILITY 61
Well, you just point the cursor or Justifier and press the fire button

LASTABILITY 47
Pointing the cursor and pressing fire is as interesting as it sounds.

VFM 38
Too similar to the dull first game to make it worth buying.

OVERALL 58
Limited in variety and gameplay, try one of Konami's platformers instead.



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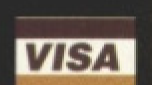
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FIFA SOCCER 95

MAKING A PASS

Complaints regarding the inflexibility of the first game's control system have been addressed, and the control over the players has been refined. Passing is now more integral to the action, and long crosses can be met with a knock on header, whils a bouncing ball can be volleyed — all very instinctively.





COMMENT

GUS

FIFA Soccer was the great football game of all time. But hands up, anyone who found certain elements of the gameplay, shall we say, en petit frustrating? Thought so, and those areas: passing, set-pieces and goalies have been pleasingly updated. Add to that a lovely new front end, much more comprehensive tournaments and playoffs, better graphics and much better sound, and EA have improved that which didn't seem to need improving.

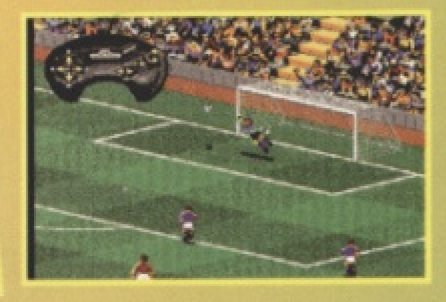
FIFA is one of those games that needs no introduction. It remained at the top of the Megadrive sales chart longer than Wet Wet Wet. However it had a few annoying points which only became apparent after prolonged play.

Taking such gripes into account, FIFA '95 is an enhanced version with smoother graphics, a neater passing system, and more player control. Now you can engineer cool diving headers and neat one-twos without wondering exactly how you did it. And with the huge range of teams, maybe West Ham can lift a trophy at last...



▲ *It's that Mexican goalie, compost or sommit...*



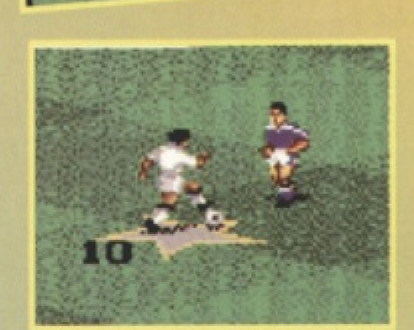




COMMENT

STEVE

I love FIFA, me: I'm a sucker for the realism the EA game's perspective offers. For this update, EA have listened to their detractors and tarted up the control system whilst adding a wide range of teams from every league imaginable. Headers, volleys and, most importantly, passing are now second nature to perform, and the goalies are a little more fallible — much more realistic. An excellent update, ensuring FIFA '95 is the best footy game available.





ALL AROUND THE WORLD (AND I-I-I...)

EA have included teams from virtually every league on the planet. Thus, In addition to those old stalwarts Germany, Italy and El Tel's Ingerlaaaaand, national sides from Brazil, Greece, Holland and Denmark are also on offer. Each side is given a series of ratings for their performance in defence and injuries and players must be managed.



GRAPHICS 91
Neater sprites and better animation.

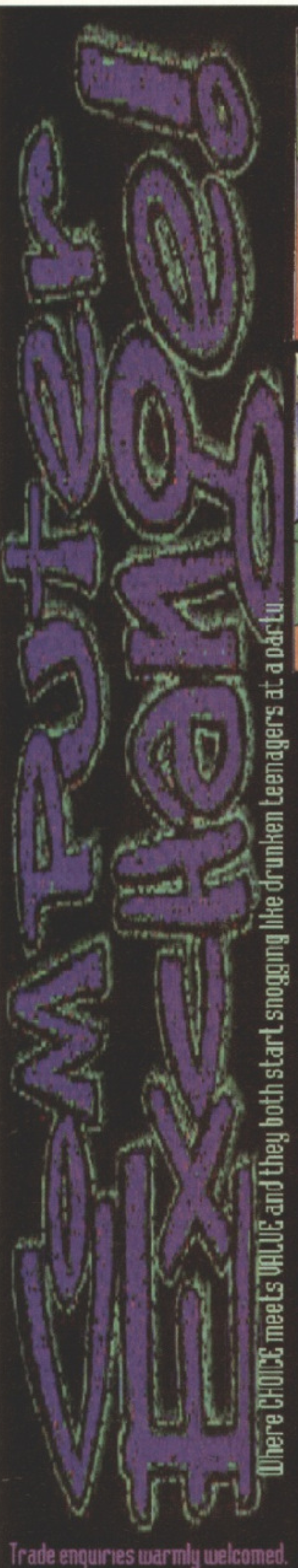
SOUND 85
Brilliant chanting and crowd FX. The EA sound boys did good.

PLAYABILITY 93
Even more playable than the first FIFA. Blimey!

LASTABILITY 92
More kicking action than a skinhead convention.

VFM 91
Loads of teams, dozens of options, and supreme playability.

OVERALL 92
If you thought FIFA was as good as it got. FIFA '95 will make you think again.













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MEAN YOB

More bouncy than a dozen inflatable castles. Breezier than Littlehampton sea front. Wittier than every Croft and Perry sitcom ever (apart from perhaps You Rang M'Lud). Yes, Yob has returned to answer more of your inane questions and generally suffer at the hands of the cyst-swigging anal announcements who think their funny. Just think, in a few years time you lot will be running our banks, factories and offices. What a horrible thought...

If you want to write to Yob about anything — and that includes girlfriend troubles (not that you lot could ever get one — perhaps you could write to him about that!) — send your scrawls to:
THAT STAIN? NO THAT'S SWEAT, MUM...
MEAN YOB,
MEAN MACHINES SEGA, PRIORY COURT,
30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON,
EC1R 3AU

MARC SINGER

Dear Yob
Yob, Yob, MEAN MACHINES is the best mag ever. I've only been buying it for a couple of months now, but it is excellent. The only problem is free gifts. You need more! How's about a Mortal Kombat II or Super Streetfighter II Review and Help video or a set of postcards?
Terry Jeffryes, Harlow, Essex
YOB: **Hey, how about covermounting a Sub-Zero suit like the guy in Steve's Q&A wanted! Honestly, that guy deserves such derision it's unbelievable. You can just guess that he wears one of those coats that folds into its own pocket, but with the hood drawstring pulled so tight, that the trapped air makes his head look all pointy.**

CYNTHIA ROTHROCK

Dear Yob
Well, excuse me but... whatever happened to the competition held aeons ago in Issue 1? It was a Comet-related competition where you were asked to design a poster or some sort of picture which related to the Gamesmaster section in Comet. If you won, you had the chance to win a console of your choice, or something like that. It was so long ago, I can hardly remember the exact details. It may not have been MEAN MACHINES' fault, but I believe we, your readers, have been fiddled! I feel it is a disgrace that thousands of people worked hard and long on their entries, with absolutely nothing coming of it.
Someone Annoyed, Somewhere
YOB: **Have you tried writing to Comet? No, didn't think so. I went to ask Richard Leadbetter what it was all about, but he was off pickling leeks to send to Jaz — the only other guy who knows what you're on about.**

CHUCK NORRIS

Dear Yob
I like reading those letters that get sent to you. Especially those ones that cuss you down so low your chin touches the ground, well your chin touches the ground anyway. As for that hairstyle, I know you want to look like Guile from Streetfighter, but you don't even come close. Did your Mum give you the patch on the chin after she slogged you a left hook, or did you cut yourself shaving? The tin can you're wearing looks like the baked bean can I threw out just the other day. You haven't been going through the bins again, have you? I'll have to tell your Mummy! Oh, and by the way, you dribble too much.
Darren Lynch, Camden Town, London
YOB: **Camden Town, eh? I can just guess that every Saturday at about four 'o'clock you can be found rooting around in the boxes behind where the veg stalls were looking for the other cabbages so you won't be so lonely.**

MICHAEL IRONSIDE

Dear Yob
I know this sort of thing should go to Q&A, but I'd rather write to you since I think that Steve can barely work out which end of the pen to use. Please answer my questions.



▲ *What next, Mark Tilly, Streets of Rage Four Wddings and a Funeral?*

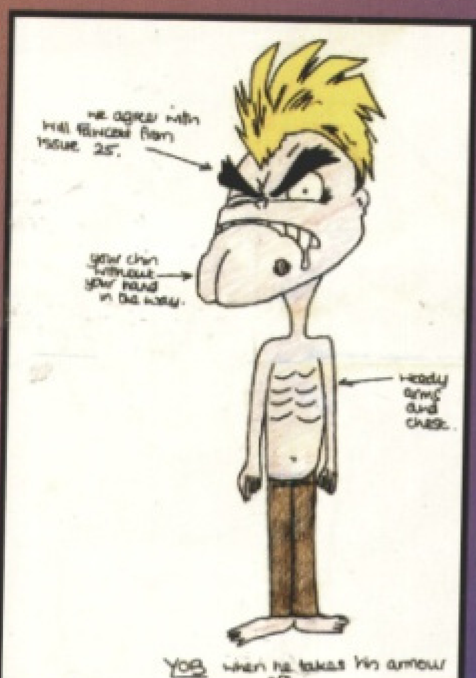


▲ *Just £10 could buy Scott Turnbull of Chester a new set of fingers.*

1. Why did Jaz leave for America?
2. Was he your best friend?
3. What is your real name?
4. I know a person who said that Super Streetfighter II was originally to be called Streetfighter III, but it was too much like the original. Is this true?
5. Is a Mortal Kombat movie planned?
6. What do you think of Mortal Kombat II?
7. One last question. What do you think of Steve?

Robbie Shand, Elgin, Moray

YOB: **1. He got sick of irritating gits like you writing in. 2. Let's just say I liked him more than I care for you. 3. Sir to you. 4. Your mate work for Capcom does he? Or maybe he's just talking crap because he knows a gullible sod like you will believe anything he says. 5. Yes. 6. More fun than popping balloons behind old people with weak hearts. 7. He's fine — we just wish he'd stop lighting his farts.**



▲ *Self portrait by someone to scared to stick his name on the back.*

CHRISTOPHER LAMBERT

Dear Yob
I am writing to you from South Africa, in case you're too stupid to realise where South Africa is. I bet you have the face of a baboon's bum and are so sad and stupid you'd fail your blood test. But enough of the stupid insults. I'm writing to you because the other day I went inside one of the game shops here, and saw they had a game on a NES called Somario. It had the same intro as Sonic except Mario came out of the ring instead of Sonic. The game had Sonic's backgrounds and baddies. Now, what I would like to know is how Nintendo can do this to Sega's license? Keep up the good work on the magazine.

J R C Laughton, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

YOB: **Yeah, Jimmy Chin. And I reckon it was a 987MEG cart, and you saw it the day you were out with your girlfriends Claudia Schiffer and Meg Ryan. I bet with your astounding intellect it took you ages to work out how to spell the name of your home town. Perhaps you ought to move to Leeds where you'll find it slightly easier. Not that they'll have you.**



▲ Don't you trust us with originals, Sam Webster of Oxford? Quite right too...

DOLPH LUNGREN

Dear Yob
I have been a proud reader of MEAN MACHINES for two years now, and during those two years, few magazines have come close to your witty, colourful, and informative magazine. Out of the magazines I read, you keep the price as low as possible and maintain an average of 100 pages per issue. It's a pity some people don't appreciate this, namely Digitiser. And before you say, "Oh no, not another Digitiser letter", bear in mind this letter involves your very own magazine. On Wednesday 21st September, not fit to go to school, and generally lounging around the house, I happened to tune into Digitiser on Teletext. "Mean Machines Dying" read the headline for their 'news' section. Curious, I read on. The article was based on sales figures for the last six months. Sarcastically it read, "Biggest loser, we're horrified to report, is Mean Machines Sega who has lost over a third of its readers in the past 6 months." I found it most sickening that Digitiser gleaned some pleasure from it all. They just happened to forget you were still the best-selling Sega mag. Rather than a damning reflection on Mean Machines, I thought it most degrading on the part of Digitiser. It only served to assert the quality of your magazine, which despite a loss in readership, still managed to whip the baboon-like asses of every Future magazine. Digitiser backed a real loser when they teamed up with Future publishing. From now on, when you review a disastrous game, instead of saying "this game is crap", make your point crystal clear and state, "This game is complete Digitiser!"
Christopher Quigley, Co. Armagh, N. Ireland
YOB:**But how can we compete against something as influential as Digitiser? Blimey, it would be like taking on Stevie Wonder in a timed 'Join-The-Dots' contest. Yes, they did conveniently neglect to mention that we're still the biggest-selling mag, didn't they. Perhaps it was because they thought it would mess up their story. And we can't have that getting in the way of their 'scoops' can we...**

LOU FERRIGNO

Dear Yob
I am the Master. You will obey me! I hope you have been watching my adventures on UK Gold every Sunday, for I have covered this letter with a special hypnotic spray, so now you will be forced to read my words with interest and admiration for my evil genius. Anyway Yob, I must tell of my recent problem. My TARDIS developed a slight, er... 'navigational error', and materialised in Bognor. I promptly enslaved this sad mockery of a holiday resort, and I am now using it as a power base to take over the whole world... past, present, and future! Ahahahaha! But it's not enough, – these facile victories only leave me hungry for more conquest! Also, I travelled many years into the past to try and get my black gloves on Issue 0 of Mean Machines. When I'd accomplished this, I went to the future to see how your magazine was getting on. Congratulations, Mean Machines is still number one in the year 2019. And the Saturn is the only new 'Super Console' to conquer over all the others. As for all your readers... listen to the Master! You will obey me, subscribe to Mean Machines for all eternity.
The Master, Gallifrey
YOB:**Yes, I have been watching you every Sunday in UK Gold's omnibus editions, and what I want to know is where do you buy all your ridiculous disguises — and why Peter Davison hasn't put an end to your evil ways by putting his hand up your bum like he used to in All Creatures Great And Small. As for taking over Bognor... well, it needed someone to, you just ask Steve who comes from Chichester a few miles away.**

FRANK STALLONE

Dear Yob
I am writing to tell you that I think it would be a brilliant idea if released Equalizer: The Game. Just think you could take control of Edward Woodward. I love that man, he's great! He makes the sheep go baa!! Have you got any big door posters of the Equalizer? I'd pluck a duck to shake his hand and look into his stern eyes. Just the thought sends shivers through my body.
Adam M., Redditch
YOB:It was be a dull as Redditch, though. Every episode McCall takes on the Mob/ street gangs/ corrupt police or whatever, and he never has to resort to violence! Mind you at his age, McCall should be sitting in a chair with a blanket over his legs, watching daytime telly, and emitting the farts that a diet of tinned meatballs does to a man. And he's married to Betty out of Some Mother's Do 'Ave 'Em.

ROBERT ZDAR

Dear Yob
So you didn't find my Captain Picard joke funny, eh? Well, try this poem I wrote about Digitiser.

The fools who work at Digitiser
Were trying to act hard,

Their 'programme' was Bab
So they travelled by cab
To Mean Machines' backyard.

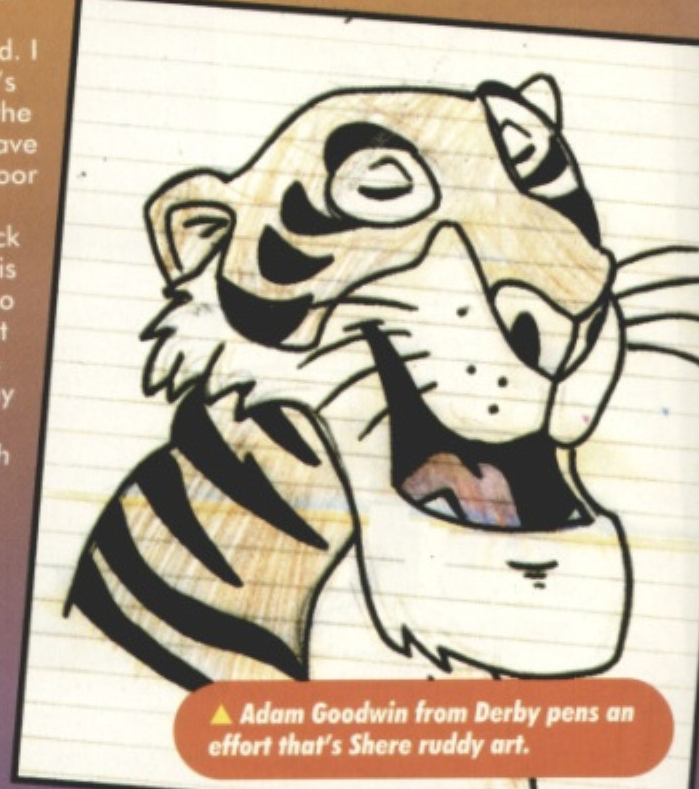
The man with a long chin insulted Yob.
He called him a hairy baboon,

So Yob came out,
And gave him a clout,
Then kicked his ass over the moon.

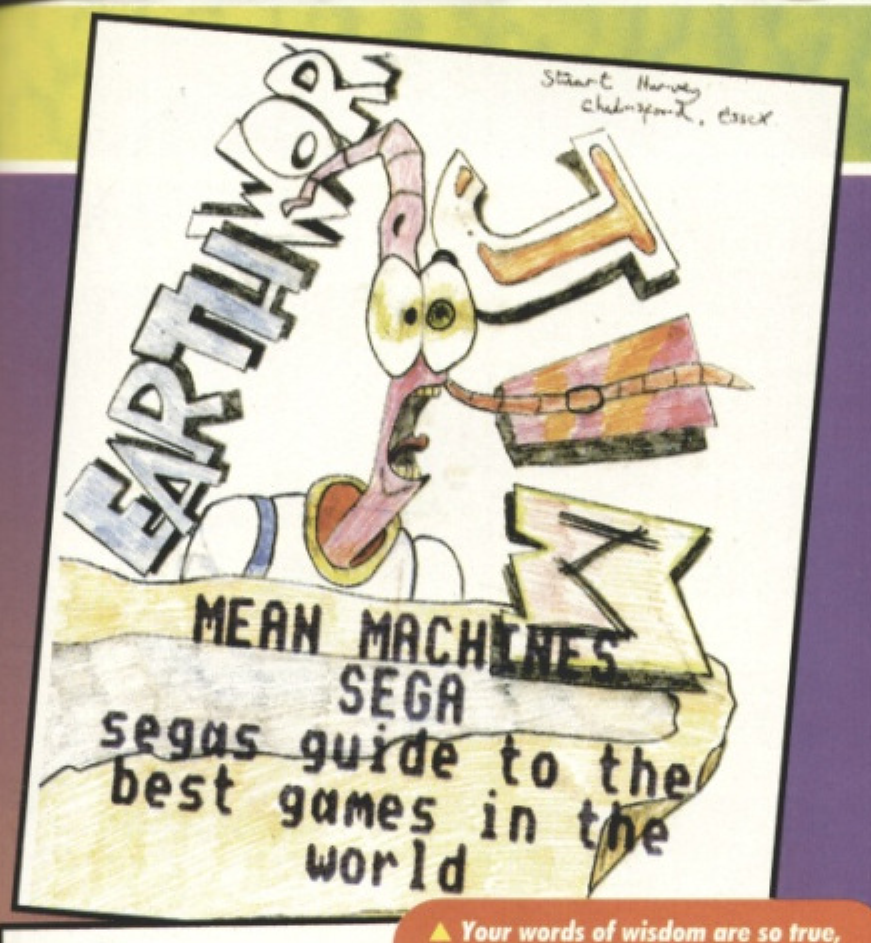
The rest of the morons from Digitiser
Just stood in a trance.

Then Steve joined in,
He kicked them all in,
And they ran home cacking their pants!

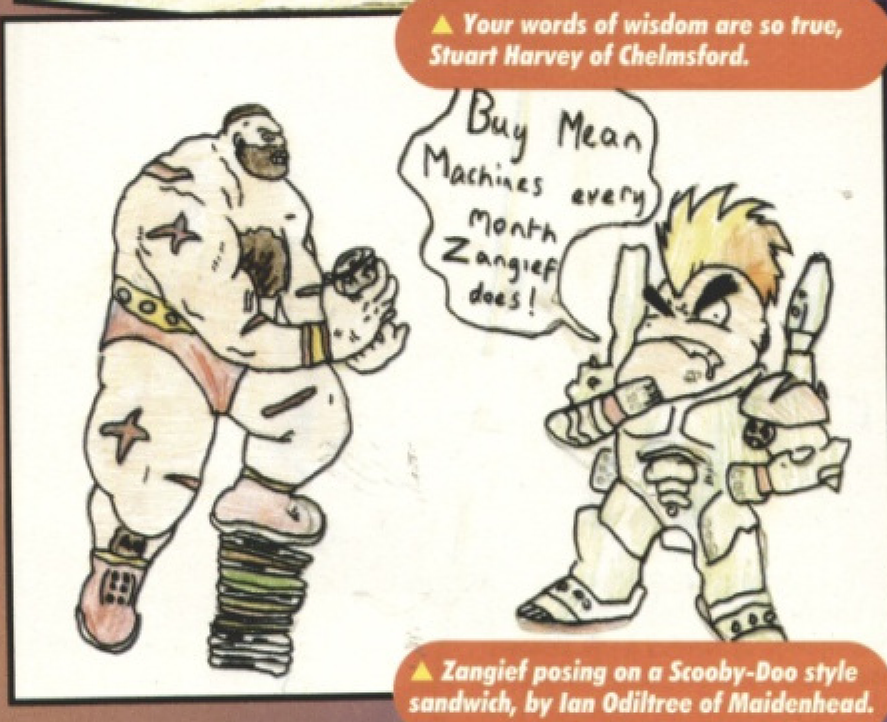
A bit of an improvement over the Picard thing, don't you think? Well, until next time... Oh, by the way, I know this bloke in the United States Colonial Marine



▲ Adam Goodwin from Derby pens an effort that's Shere ruddy art.



▲ Your words of wisdom are so true, Stuart Harvey of Chelmsford.



▲ Zangief posing on a Scooby-Doo style sandwich, by Ian Odiltree of Maidenhead.

Corps, who can get you an M41A Pulse Rifle and 30mm pump action grenade launcher for a very reasonable price. I imagine it fell off the back of a PowerLoader or something.
Paul Johnson, Skegness
YOB:**We were planning to run a series of Digitiser-style lo-res illustrations and screenshots in this very issue, but sadly someone nicked our crayons.**

RUTGER HAUER

Dear Yob
You think you're so smart writing 'clever' answers to people's letters when you don't like what they've written. But I think you just can't handle the truth about yourself. You try to look so mean, but I don't think you look mean at all. I think you look pathetic. You look like you've been rammed face-first into a brick wall, and you have to wear that armour to cover up the fact you're a weed. And that plaster on your face, did you cut yourself shaving, are you old enough to shave? Do you get the feeling that nobody likes you? We don't!
The Yob Bashers
The nob bashers, more like. I'm surprised your hands weren't too cramped to hold the pen used to write this drivel. Try getting out more.

Right, sod off that's yer lot.

Yob's back next month with his tales of the Justice Bill demo and his impromptu shopping spree in Dixons.





I know the body is a complex thing, but why is it farts come in a variety of aromas? Just what chemical equation results in a sulphery/ eggy one, whilst others come out wet and smelling of damp washing? And do some sound squeaky? After all, it's all the same gas isn't it? I may not be able to answer these questions, but I know my stuff when it comes to Sega-related questions. So why not put me to the test. After all, at least I keep my brain inside my cranium — probably because I don't need to prove to people I've got one!
Send your letters to:

THE CHEESE PEOPLE OF BEVERLEY HILLS,
Q&A, MEAN MACHINES SEGA,
PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE,
LONDON, EC1R 3AU

HUNTER HILLMAN



Dear Steve
A few days ago I bought Mortal Kombat II on the Megadrive. There's no doubt it's an excelent game, but I think it's tad slow on the Megadrive. Therefore I have few questions concerning the game.
1. I read in a magazine that the game plays a lot faster on the US and Japanese Genesis. Why? Doesn't it use the same engine as the European Megadrive?
2. I've also noticed that the Super NES version plays a lot faster. But I always thought the Megadrive was faster. What's going on?
3. It also seems the Super NES version has a presentation of the fighters (picture and biography). But the Megadrive hasn't. Is the Super NES cart bigger than the 24MEG Megadrive cart?
Dave Franck, Schelle, Belgium
STEVE: **1. It does, but the US and jap machines use a faster frame rate which makes them faster. 2. The Super NES version is marginally faster, due to the machine's slightly superior sprite handling routines. 3. They're both 24MEG, but Megadrive MKII has more frames of animation and is smoother — thus, something had to go and it was the intro pics.**

FORD ANGLIA



Dear Steve
Congrats on a fab mag! Could you answer some of my questions?
1. On FIFA '95 have the players got proper names?
2. Has the crowd on FIFA '95 got new chants?
3. How much will it cost?
4. Will FIFA appear on the 32X?
Ste Marron, Liverpool
STEVE: **1. Nope. 2. A few, as the sound has been generally revamped. 3. £44.95. 4. It's a possibility, but EA are being tight-lipped about their 32X plans.**

AUSTIN MAXI



Dear Steve
Please put me out of my misery. Will there be a sequel to the absolutely brilliant Flashback?
Adam Pask, Peterborough
STEVE: **Not in the immediate future, I'm afraid. Delphine are up to their ears in Another World 2 for Virgin, and are looking to the PC CD formats for their next project.**

FORD CORTINA

Dear Steve
Please answer my questions.
1. Where can I get a RAM cartridge for saving information for my Mega-CD games?
2. How much will it cost?
3. I have Thunderhawk, but is Battlecorps still worth getting?
4. In my Mega-CD's Internal Memory there is something with the title

P ROSE

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE 32X, BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK...

A lot of our letters just keep asking the same old crap, so we've decided to bundle them together in order to givea complete guide to one subject each issue. This month we're concentrating on Sega's plug in Glade mushroom Air Freshener: the 32X. We're good like that.

1. When will the 32X be released?





2. What is the difference between the Sega Saturn and the 32X?
3. How much will the 32X cost?
4. How much will the software cost?
5. Should I buy the 32X or wait until the Saturn is released?
6. Will the Saturn be able to run 32X games?
7. Is the Multi-Mega compatible with the 32X?
8. Will there be a game package with the 32X? What will it be?
9. Will Daytona USA, Rebel Assault, Virtua Star Wars, Alien, Predator, Mortal Kombat 2, Virtua Fighters, Virtua Soccer, Super Streetfighter II Turbo, any Sonic come out on the 32X?
10. Will Fahrenheit on the 32X CD have VHS quality FMV?
11. Is it possible for the 32X to speed up the access time on the Mega-CD?
12. Will the custom sound chips in the 32X produce the same quality as the Mega-CD?
13. Since the 32X will have more power and all these custom chips, will the cartridges still require huge and costly memories to produce good games?
14. How does the 32X compare to the 3DO?
15. How many colours will the 32X be able to show on-screen?
16. Is it worth waiting for the 'arcade perfect' Mortal Kombat 2 on the 32X?
17. Will the 32X work with the Mega-PC?
18. Do you think the Mega-CD will be left in the dark once the 32X is launched? Will lots of games still be made for it?
19. Does the 32X take ordinary Megadrive games?
20. If I have a Japanese Megadrive, will I need to buy a Japanese 32X, even though I've had my Megadrive converted to take British games?
21. Will Virtua Racing Deluxe on the 32X have more than 3 tracks?
22. Is the 32X better than the Amiga CD32?
23. Can the 32X do the same things as the Saturn if connected to a Megadrive and Mega-CD?
24. Does the 32X require a separate power supply?

STEVE: **1. December 4th. 2. A CD drive and faster processing speed. 3. £170 without a game. 4. Between £40-£60 depending on cart size. 5. The Saturn won't be here for ages, so I'd recommend the 32X. 6. It hasn't been decided. 7. Yes. 8. Not initially. 9. Only MKII and a Sonic game of some sort have been confirmed from those on your list. 10. Apparently. 11. No. 12. No. 13. nope, Star Wars Arcade is a mere 24MEG, for example. 14. As good as, but with more playable games. 15. 32000. 16. Yup. 17. No. 18. It won't be given a massive new lease of life, but there are some neat games for the two planned. 19. No. 20. No. 21. Yes, it has five. 22. Is Linford Christie faster than Christie Brown. 23. No. 24. Yes.**

'PRINCE_JRO_'. It has nothing to do with any of my games. Can you tell me what it is?
Steven Walker, Kilbirnie, Ayrshire
STEVE: **1. You can't yet. 2. Nowt, because you can't get one, dummy. 3. Yessiree, it has got far more depth. 4. It sounds like a saved game. Prince Of Persia, perhaps? Perhaps the system had been used before you bought it.**

FORD CAPRI

Dear Steve
I desperately want to program my own video games. Which computer do you suggest I buy, and which books would be the most useful?
Michael Clarke, Melton Mowbray, Leics
STEVE: **A PC is generally regarded as the best beginner's machine as the majority of the UK's developers use them. For console development, though, you'll need very expensive porting equipment, so start writing games in PC language before experimenting with Machine Code or maybe C (a commonly-used console language when porting games). Any books on learning to program will help. For further info, why not contact some of the UK's development teams: Probe or Core, for example.**

TRIUMPH DOLOMITE

Dear Steve
I would be most grateful if you could answer the following questions for me.
1. What happened to the Megadrive conversion of NES Star Wars, which you said would be out in April?
2. Other than Rebel Assault and Star Wars Arcade, will any other Star Wars games be released and for which systems?
3. Will there ever be an official release for Star Trek:TNG?
4. Will you print a Best of MMS Vol.3?





5. When will Rise of the Dragon be released?
Jame Warren, Poole, Dorset
STEVE: **1. US Gold have shelved it unfortunately. 2. A game based on Fall Of The Republic (the new Star Wars film) is scheduled for release nearer the film's release date. No details of what system or when, though. 3. It doesnt seem likely. 4. It's on the cards. 5. It's stuck in 'Import Limbo', and looks set to remain so for a few months yet.**

MINI CLUBMAN

Dear Steve
I have been reading your fab mag for some time, and I have a few questions to ask you.
1. While playing against Kintaro as Sub-Zero, I did a freeze attack and was frozen myself. Could you please tell me what happened?
2. I heard from a friend if you win 250 games in a row, you play a game of Pong. Is this true?
3. If so, what is Pong?
4. How much will FIFA '95 cost for the Megadrive?
5. Is there going to be a Streets of Rage 4?
6. Will there be an MK III?
Russ and Nelly, Maidenhead
STEVE: **1. It sounds like you pulled off two freeze moves ina row, whih results in Sub-Zero getting iced! 2. Yup. 3. Pong was one of the first ever video games, and is a very basic game of tennis with the player controlling a line as they bounce a square ball to their opponent. 4. See the above letter. 5. Yep, 6. Likely.**

CHRYSLER ALPINE

Dear Steve
I have some questions to keep you on your toes.
1. In the new Streetfighter movie, who plays Ryu?
2. Is there any news of Streetfighter III?
3. Theoretically is it possible for all the best Spectrum and Commodore 64 games on a Mega-CD disc? If so, will it ever happen?
Peter Howard, Rayleigh, Essex
STEVE: **1. Some bloke called Byron Mann. 2. There are all sorts of rumours of using MKII-style digitised fighters, but nothing definite. 3. Not bloody likely.**

VAUXHALL VIVA

Dear Steve
I am writing to ask if you know how to get on the motorbikes in Streets of Rage III, as there is a photo of it in Issue 17.
Andrew Shepherd, Allestree, Derby
STEVE: **Easy, get hold of the Japanese game, Bare Knuckle III, and there they are.**

ROVER 2000

Dear Steve
I'm not going to go all ga-ga over your brilliant magazine (although a little sweet-talking never goes amiss), so please answer these questions for me.
1. I recently went on holiday to Hong Kong and purchased a Megadrive 2. Will a UK Game Genie or Action Replay work on it?
2. My second query is that in last month's issue you said there was a cheat for Super Streetfighter II to access the Turbo mode. What is it please?
Sam Kneebone, Penzance, Cornwall
STEVE: **1. Probably. 2. Oops, according to Paul Bufton that's all lies. See last month's tips for the only cheat in the game.**



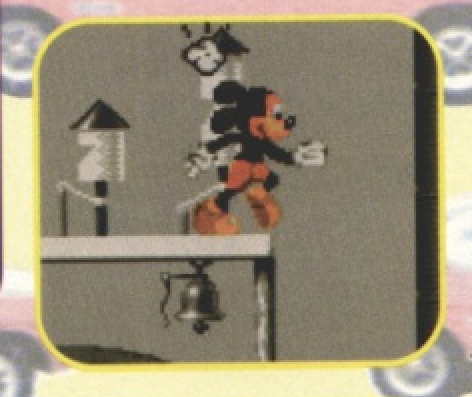
CITROEN PALLAS

Dear Steve
I have a few questions to tax your brain.
1. In Issue 22 of your magazine, I saw an ad in Megamart for a double Pro Fighter diskdrive for the Megadrive. What is it?
2. What can it do?
3. I got a 14" TV for Christmas, but I can't find the Scart socket, what am I looking for?
4. Will a Hi-Fi improve the quality of my Megadrive's sound?
Gerard Foster, Abingdon, Oxford
STEVE: **1. It sounds like a dodgy piracy device which shouldn't have been in there. It certainly won't be there again. 2. It's a dodgy rip-off device. 3. A long rectangular port with loads of holes. 4. What do you think?**

AUSTIN ALLEGRO

Dear Steve
Could you please answer these questions for me?
1. At the recent CES show, the Nintendo game, Donkey Kong Country looked brilliant with amazing graphics. Is the Megadrive capable of anything like this?
2. When is Muscle Bomber from Capcom coming out?
3. If Nintendo release the Ultra 64 for £250, will Sega release the Saturn at a higher price?
4 Which do you prefer out of Lion King and Mickey Mania?
John Mornington, Walsall, W. Midlands

STEVE: **1. Nope, but having played Donkey Kong Country I'm not fussed either. Earthworm Jim drops on it froma great height. 2. February. 3. Probably not, but if Nintendo get the Ultra 64 out for that I'll be very surprised. 4. Mickey Mania — there's more to it.**





FORD CONSUL

Dear Steve
Please, please, please answer my questions, because I must know the answers.
1. Are Electronic Arts releasing Road Rash III?
2. If so, when will it be released?
3. Please could you put these games in order from best to worst: Earthworm Jim, Mortal Kombat II, Super Streetfighter II, and Virtua Racing.
Alex Hislop, Basinstoke, Hamps
STEVE: **1.Yes, check news in this issue. 2. It's too early to say. 3. MKII, EWJ, SSF, VR — but it was very close!**

AUSTIN PRINCESS

Dear Steve
Could you answer the following questions?
1. What is the 'mode' button for on a six-button joypad?
2. Is there any hope of the following coming out?
3. How much do you get paid?
4. Which is the best out of SSF II and Earthworm Jim?
Daryl Woollard, Worthing
STEVE: **1. It's there to switch between control modes — but there hasn't been a game released which is complicated enough to use twelve different buttons! 2. What following? 3. Not enough. 4. EWJ.**



THUNDERSLY INVACAR

Dear Steve
I have seen Sub-Zero's costume in an issue of Mean Machines. Could you please tell me where I can get hold of one?
Ryan Collins, Skipton, N. Yorks
STEVE: **Yep. Go to Outworld, turn left at Kahn's Palace and you'll see a gentleman's tailor. Go in, ask for the 'Blue Lycra Special' and he'll take your measurements. Actually, I can't believe you're sad enough to actually want to own one. Where are you going to wear it exactly!**

And once more Q&A came to an end and once again the brave outro writer sought to convey the same message — that Steve will be back next month with a special Christmas tinged edition of Britain's favourite answering service. Who knows, he may have even more space to showcase a partiicular vexing subject. He normally writes this bit, but he's at Sony right now, see, looking at Frankenstein. Bye!

MEGAMART

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MEAN MACHINES SEGA presents another first, the Next Month board game. It's all about getting exclusives and being the best — our forté, natch.

KONAMI EXCLUSIVE	Fall asleep reading Teletext Miss a turn.	Terrible cover lose 1 copy card.	SEGA EXCLUSIVE	Saturn exclusive Take 1 copy card.	Become a poster issue lose 4 copy cards.	EA game scrapped. Owner return it to the pile.	Bumper 132 page issue Take 2 copy cards.
STEAL	KONAMI		SONY		SEGA		ACCLAIM EXCLUSIVE
SONY EXCLUSIVE							STEAL
Free paperback Take 1 copy card.	ACCLAIM		VIRGIN		EA		Naughty caption lose all exclusives.
Working weekends Take two more turns.							VIRGIN EXCLUSIVE
Konami title rescheduled. Owner return it to the pile.	STEAL	Wafer thin issue lose 2 copy cards.	EA EXCLUSIVE	Your mags smell of poo. Lose 3 copy cards.	Sell out Take a player's exclusive for 2 copy cards.	Best-Selling Sega mag take 4 copy cards.	Wet lunch stay here until you roll 5 or 6.

EXCLUSIVES When you land on a company square with an exclusive up for grabs, Roll a die. If you roll 4,5 or 6, you get the exclusive. If you get a 6 you get a copy card too.
STEAL If you land on a steal square, pick one of your opponents with an exclusive an both roll the dice. If you roll higher, you nick his exclusive.

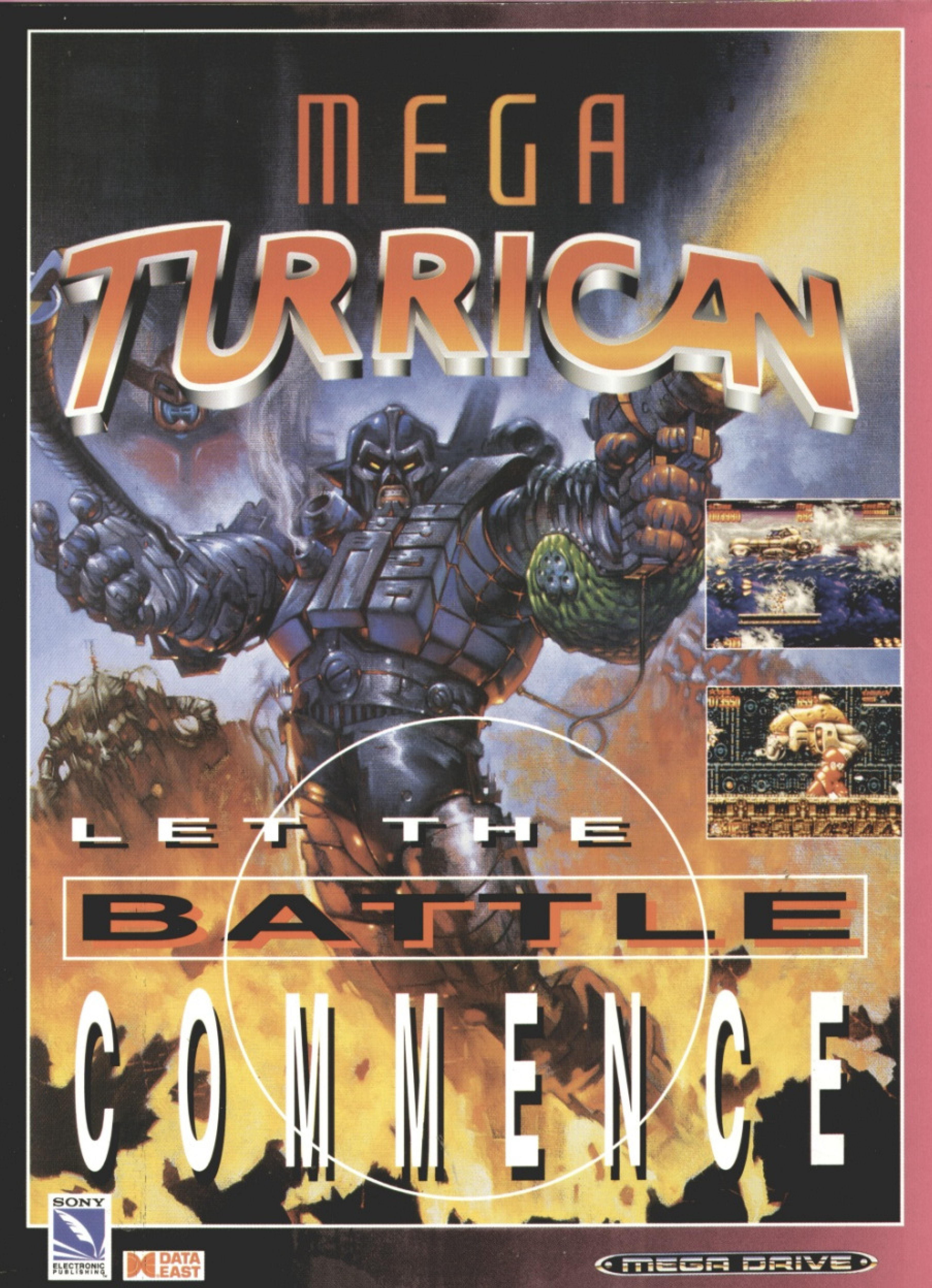
HOW TO PLAY (UP TO 4 PLAYERS): Each player starts on an 'exclusive' square with 50,000 copies (five copy cards). The aim is to get four exclusives to win the game. Each player rolls a die in turns and moves clockwise obeying the instructions on the squares. When you get an exclusive, place one of your markers on that company's slot. If you lose all your copy cards, you are out of the game.

COPY CARDS: Each represents 10,000 readers of your magazine. If you have enough, trade 50,000 for any untaken exclusive. Also, if you're a bit short, trade an exclusive for 50,000 readers.
YOU WILL NEED A dice. Counters for each player and four markers for exclusives.
Lots of copy cards representing readers.

***Exclusives is a jape, and bears no relationship to the real practice of publishing.**

A taste of the turbulent world of publishing. We're back next month with Eye of the Beholder, Doom, Virtua Deluxe, Bloodshot, Flintstones, Lemmings 2, Novastorm, Another World 2, Headdy tips and much more..

STREET DATE: NOVEMBER 30TH


MEGA
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